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The Riverside Shakespeare

IN SIX VOLUMES

VOL. VI.

II. TRAGEDIES

MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
COMEDIES HISTORIES TRAGEDIES AND POEMS

THE TEXT NEWLY EDITED WITH GLOSSARIAL
HISTORICAL AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

BY

RICHARD GRANT WHITE

II. TRAGEDIES

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The Riverside Shakespeare

VOL. VI.—TRAGEDIES

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK
KING LEAR
OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA
CYMBELINE
PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

INTRODUCTION.

The story of the tragedy which has added more than any other of his works to Shakespeare's fame (although it neither is his greatest play nor contains his greatest poetry), was well known in England long before it was made the subject of dramatic representation. Indeed, it was turned into a play for the very reason that it was "an old story." The chief interest of the audiences for which Shakespeare wrote was in events which they already had in mind. These they liked to have vividly set before their eyes and made impressive by living men seeming the actual personages of legend or of history. They delighted to hear these creatures of flesh and blood utter their joys and their sorrows with that soul-stirring union of homely strength and poetical elevation which came and vanished in the Elizabethan era. But the great point was always the story; and that having popular interest, if it were well known, so much the better. The legend of *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* made its first appearance, we have reason to believe, in the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus, who wrote about the end of the twelfth century. This was translated into French, and published in Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* at Paris in 1570. The French version was translated into English; when, we do not know. The earliest edition known is dated 1608; but we may be sure that it had been printed in English long before that year. From this story that of our tragedy differs in some important details and in its ending; but the variation is due only in part to Shakespeare. We have evidence that before 1587 an English play founded on the story of *Hamlet* was well known in London; and in this play there was important variation from the old legend. For a very striking incident in this old tragedy was the incitement of young Hamlet to revenge by the ghost of his father, of which the tale told by Saxo Grammaticus says nothing. Indeed, in this earlier play the crying out of "revenge!" by the ghost and by Hamlet was so impressive that that exclamation became associated with Hamlet's name, and was almost a byword. Shakespeare took the old play in hand and entirely rewrote it, modifying the action yet again in his turn; and the result was the famous tragedy now known the world over. His dramatic version of this favorite story was so successful that it was eagerly sought by readers ; and to meet this demand an edition of it was published in quarto in 1603. Except in its first scenes, however, this edition is a monstrous caricature of Shakespeare's tragedy. It was a piratical publication, and the copy was obtained surreptitiously. All the evidence in regard to it goes to show that it was procured through the bad faith of some minor actor in Shakespeare's theatre ; partly from notes taken down during the performance; in some passages from actors' copies of their parts ; in others from the feeble memory of some person who could not understand what Shakespeare wrote, and who yet undertook to supply from his own poor brain what he could not recollect ; and, when all these sources failed, from the old play, many lines of which were made to do duty for corresponding passages in Shakespeare's drama. These scraps were huddled together in confusion and printed in haste, to meet the public demand for the new *Hamlet*. The result was such a ridiculous and mutilated misrepresentation of the real thing that (apparently in self-defence) an authentic copy of the tragedy was furnished to the "stationer" (as booksellers were then called), and in 1604 another edition in quarto was published, which justly professed on its title-page to be "enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect coppie."* There were other quarto editions before its appearance in the folio of 1623. Internal evidence shows that the editions of 1603, 1604, and 1623 (the only ones of any importance or authority) all represent one and the same drama. The most valuable text is that of 1604 ; but even the mutilated, distorted, and interpolated edition of 1603 furnishes important aid to the completion of the tragedy as it came from Shakespeare's pen, which after all, it is to be feared, is not quite attainable. The text of the folio shows evidences of incorrect transcription and also of sophistication. It probably represents the acting copy, and hence omits some very important passages not necessary to stage effect. Of these there are in a few instances, vestiges in the mutilated edition of 1603 which do not appear in that of 1604. *Hamlet* was probably written about the year 1600. The period of its action is historically very uncertain ; but in Shakespeare's imagination it seems to have been somewhere about the tenth century. The duration of the action is as uncertain and indefinite as its period; but into five acts Shakespeare seems to have compressed, as his manner was, the incidents of not less than from eight to ten years.

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* These two important and interesting title-pages are reproduced on the next page, with the typographical arrangement of the originals.

THE
Tragicall Hiſtorie of HAMLET
Prince of Denmarke

By William Shake-ſpeare.

As it hath beene diuerſe times acted by his Highneſſe ſeruants in the Cittie of London : as alſo in the two Vniuerſities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elſe-where.

Stationer's
Device.

At London printed for N : L. and Iohn Trundell.
1603.

THE
Tragicall Hiſtorie of HAMLET,
Prince of Denmarke.

By William Shakeſpeare.

Newly imprinted and enlarged to almoſt as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie.

Stationer's
Device.

AT LONDON
Printed by I. R. for N. L. and are to be ſold at his
ſhoppe vnder Saint Dunſtons Church in
Fleetſtreet. 1604.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Claudius, *King of Denmark.*
Hamlet, *son to the late, and nephew to the present King.*
Polonius, *Lord Chamberlain.*
Horatio, *friend to Hamlet.*
Laertes, *son to Polonius.*
Voltimand,
Cornelius,
Rosencrantz,
Guildenstern, } *courtiers.*
Osric,
A Gentleman,
A Priest.
Marcellus,
Bernardo, } *officers.*
Francisco, *a soldier.*

Reynaldo, *servant to Polonius.*
Players.
Two Clowns, Grave-diggers.
Fortinbras, *Prince of Norway.*
A Captain.
English Ambassadors.

Gertrude, *Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet.*
Ophelia, *daughter to Polonius.*

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.

Ghost of Hamlet's Father.

Scene: Elsinore, Denmark.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Elsinore. A platform before the castle.*

FRANCISCO *at his post. Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Ber. Who 's there?
Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.
Ber. Long live the king!
Fran. Bernardo?
Ber. He.
Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.
Ber. 'T is now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.
Fran. For this relief much thanks: 't is bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.
Ber. Have you had quiet guard?
Fran. Not a mouse stirring.
Ber. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.
Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who 's there?

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Hor. Friends to this ground.
Mar. And liegeman to the Dane.
Fran. Give you good night.
Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:
Who hath reliev'd you?
Fran. Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit.*
Mar. Holla! Bernardo!
Ber. Say,
What, is Horatio there?
Hor. A piece of him.
Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.
Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?
Ber. I have seen nothing.

---

[13] *rivals* = partners, having the same occupation and purpose.
[15] *the Dane* = emphatical; the chief Dane, the King.

Mar. Horatio says 't is but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.
Hor. Tush, tush, 't will not appear.
Ber. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story
What we have two nights seen.
Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.
Ber. Last night of all,
When yond same star that 's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one, —

Enter Ghost.

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!
Ber. In the same figure, like the King that 's dead.
Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.
Ber. Looks it not like the King? mark it, Horatio.
Hor. Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.
Ber. It would be spoke to.
Mar. Question it, Horatio.
Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!
Mar. It is offended.
Ber. See, it stalks away!
Hor. Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak! [*Exit Ghost.*
Mar. 'T is gone, and will not answer.
Ber. How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on 't?
Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.
Mar. Is it not like the King?
Hor. As thou art to thyself:

---

[29] *approve* = confirm, prove that our eyes are right.

[42] *a scholar:* and could speak Latin, the only language that ghosts were supposed to understand, because it was in that language that priests exorcised them.

[49] *sometimes* = in time past.

Such was the very armour he had on
When he th' ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'T is strange.
Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.
Hor. In what particular thought to work I know not;
But in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
Mar. Good, now sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day:
Who is 't that can inform me?
Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet —
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him —
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same cov'nant,
And carriage of the article's design,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in 't; which is no other —

---

[62] *parle:* loosely used as debate, in the sense of quarrel.
[63] *Polacks* = Poles.
[77] *toward* = coming, in movement to-ward.
[82] *Fortinbras* = *fort en bras.* Strong-i'-th'-arm now exists as a surname in the North of England.
[100] *stomach* = appetite, here for fighting: loosely used.

As it doth well appear unto our state —
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsatory, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.
Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so:
Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the King
That was and is the question of these wars.
Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:

. . . .

As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climature and countrymen. —
But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!

Re-enter Ghost.

I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me: *[Cock crows.*
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
(Which happily foreknowing may avoid,)
O, speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it: stay, and speak! Stop it, Marcellus.

. . . Here a line or more has been lost.
[118] *moist star* = the moon.
[123] *omen:* loosely used for that which the omen is supposed to foreshadow.
[125] *climature* = clime: the form for rhythm's sake; the thought suggested by the foregoing allusions to the powers of nature.
[137] *cross it.* To cross the path of a ghost or a fiend was to defy it.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?
Hor. Do, if it will not stand.
Ber. 'T is here!
Hor. 'T is here!
Mar. 'T is gone! [*Exit Ghost.*
We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.
Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.
Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine: and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.
Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit dares walk abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.
Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill:
Break we our watch up; and by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?
Mar. Let 's do 't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room of state in the castle.*

Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, *and* Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted

163 *takes* = bewitches, exerts injurious power.
170 *young Hamlet* = Hamlet the younger, irrespective of age.

To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 't were with a defeated joy, —
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole, —
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting:
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, —
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose, — to suppress
His further gait herein; in that the levies,
The lists and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subjects: and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the King, more than the scope
Of these delated articles allow. [*Giving a paper.*
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor., *Vol.* In that and all things will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.
[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*
And now, Laertes, what 's the news with you?

---

[9] *jointress* = woman who had a jointure in.

[11] *dropping eye.* I believe that S. intended "drooping eye," for which the old text seems to me a mere irregular spelling and a much inferior reading.

[22] *pester* = worry by numbers, iteration, here, importune.

[31] *gait* = going.

[38] *delated* = filled out.

You told us of some suit; what is 't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?
Laer. My dread lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.
King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?
Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laboursome petition, and at last
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.
King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son, —
Ham. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.
King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?
Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' th' sun.
Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 't is common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.
Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.
Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?
Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.
'T is not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected 'haviour of the visage,

---

[44] *the Dane* = the Dane, the King.

[65] *A little more than kin.* Hamlet acknowledges that there was more than kindred between them, as his uncle was also his father-in-law, but he eagerly denies that he is Claudius's son, of his kind. A little of precision in the thought is sacrificed to the jingle of the words.

[67] *i' th' sun* = leading an easy, aimless life, like one who suns himself; and with an allusion to the old proverb, "Out of God's blessing into the warm sun."

Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem;
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.
King. 'T is sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow: but to persever
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 't is unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd:
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our peevish opposition
Take it to heart? Fie! 't is a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire:
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.
Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.
Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.
King. Why, 't is a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet

---

[92] *obsequious* = suited to obsequies. *persever.* S. always accents this word on the second syllable.

[113] *Wittenberg.* This university was not established until A. D. 1502. Luther made it famous. S. used its name merely as that of a northern school, to which a Dane of his day might go.

[117] *cousin* = kinsman, in a very wide sense.

Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the King's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away. [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*
Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on 't! ah fie! 't is an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead: nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month —
Let me not think on 't — Frailty, thy name is woman! —
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears: — why she, even she —
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer — married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules; within a month:
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not nor it cannot come to good:
But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue.

Enter Horatio, Marcellus, *and* Bernardo.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!
Ham. I am glad to see you:
Horatio, — or I do forget myself.

---

[127] *rouse* = deep potation: of Danish origin.

[132] *His canon.* There is no such canon.

[141] *beteem* = permit: of unascertained etymology.

[150] *discourse of reason* = action of the mind, capacity of thought. The phrase was not uncommon in S.'s day.

[155] *flushing . . . galled* = redness . . . irritated.

[157] *dexterity:* possibly a misprint for "celerity," but more probably a loose use of the word.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.
Ham. Sir, my good friend; I 'll change that name with you:
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?
Marcellus?
Mar. My good lord —
Ham. I am very glad to see you. [*To Ber.*] Good even, sir. —
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?
Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.
Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so,
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We 'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.
Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.
Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.
Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.
Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father! — methinks I see my father.
Hor. Where, my lord?
Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.
Hor. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.
Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.
Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
Ham. Saw who?
Hor. My lord, the King your father.
Ham. The King my father!
Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.
Ham. For God's love, let me hear.
Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pie,

---

[198] *vast:* so the first quarto; possibly we should read *waste* (which has the same meaning), with the quarto of 1604.

[200] *Armed at point* = perfectly, fully, armed. *cap-a-pie* = head to foot. Old Fr adopted into English.

Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distilled
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them the third night kept the watch:
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes: I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.
Ham. But where was this?
Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.
Ham. Did you not speak to it?
Hor. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none: yet once methought
It lifted up it head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.
Ham. 'T is very strange.
Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 't is true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.
Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?
Mar. *Ber.* We do, my lord.
Ham. Arm'd, say you?
Mar. *Ber.* Arm'd, my lord.
Ham. From top to toe?
Mar. *Ber.* My lord, from head to foot.
Ham. Then saw you not his face?
Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.
Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?
Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.
Ham. Pale, or red?
Hor. Nay, very pale.
Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?
Hor. Most constantly.

---

216 *it head* = "it" with possessive sense, as elsewhere.

Ham. I would I had been there.
Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.
Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?
Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.
Mar.
Ber. } Longer, longer.
Hor. Not when I saw 't.
Ham. His beard was grizzly, — no?
Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.
Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance 't will walk again.
Hor. I warrant it will.
Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I 'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue:
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I 'll visit you.
All. Our duty to your honour.
Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: farewell. [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*
My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. [*Exit*

SCENE III. *A room in* POLONIUS' *house.*

Enter LAERTES *and* OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd: farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.
Oph. Do you doubt that?
Laer. For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.
Oph. No more but so?

---

241 *a sable silver'd.* This is mere assent with specification.
9 *suppliance* = that which fills up.

Laer. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
As he in his peculiar sect and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd,
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.
Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.

---

15 *cautel* = crafty purpose.
21 *The safety.* Here *safety* is a trisyllable.
26 *peculiar sect* = rank in life; so used by S. elsewhere; the quarto has "*particular act.*"
40 *buttons* = buds.
50 *Himself*, etc.: a confusion of persons and a consequent break in construction. Not corrupt, and plain enough.
51 *rede* = advice, counsel.

Laer. O, fear me not.
I stay too long: but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.
Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine ownself be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!
Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.
Pol. The time invites you; go; your servants tend.
Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.
Oph. 'T is in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.
Laer. Farewell. [*Exit.*
Pol. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?
Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.
Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'T is told me, he hath very oft of late

---

59 *character* = write down.
61 *vulgar* = common; in the way set forth in the next four lines.
80 *Thou canst not then be false.* This maxim, and all of those which Polonius impresses on Laertes, S. found in John Lyly's *Euphues.*

Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so, as so 't is put on me,
And that in way of caution, I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.
Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.
Pol. Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?
Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.
Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or — not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus — you 'll tender me a fool.
Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love
In honourable fashion.
Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.
Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.
Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk
Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds,
The better to beguile. This is for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,

---

102 *Unsifted:* very loosely used for "inexperienced," unless we should read "unsuited:" "sift you as wheat," Luke xxii. 31, is not to the purpose.
110 *importun'd:* accented on the second syllable.
122 *entreatments:* loosely used in the sense of yieldings to entreaty

As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to 't, I charge you: come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *The platform.*

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, *and* Marcellus.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.
Ham. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not: then it draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Ham. The King doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.
Hor. Is it a custom?
Ham. Ay, marry, is 't:
But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honoured in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth — wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin —
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners, that these men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star; —

---

[9] *up-spring* = the English name of a riotous German dance.
[17] *east and west:* as if, far and wide.
[18] *tax'd* = found fault with, adversely criticised.
[19] *clepe* = name, call.
[20] *addition* = title, style.

Their virtues else — be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo —
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: the dram of evil
Doth all the noble substance oft adulter
To his own scandal.
Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Enter Ghost.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I 'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father: royal Dane, O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[*Ghost beckons Hamlet.*

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.
Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

---

[34] *undergo.* We have in this and the seven preceding lines a striking example of S.'s carelessness of congruity, and of his disregard (if not his ignorance) of the meaning of words: the overgrowth of a complexion breaking down pales and forts; a form over-leavened; plausive (or approving) for plausible (or approved) manners; and finally, a man undergoing (that is, suffering, bearing up under) virtues, gracious and infinite. And yet the speech is a great speech.

[36] *the dram of evil.* The original has here "The dram of *eale*," and at the end of the next line, "*of a doubt.*" This passage is found only in the quarto of 1604, where we know it was printed from manuscript. The destructive confusion of the quarto text is plainly the result, in part, of an effort to make *something* out of copy that could not be deciphered. It seems to me that *eale* is a phonetic error for *evil* (that word and *devil* having been, like *spirit*, pronounced sometimes as two syllables and sometimes as one; in the quarto we have *deal* twice for *devil*), and that, as to the next line, the form of the letters, hardly less than the general sense of the passage and the particular words, *corruption* and *scandal*, which immediately precede and follow it, indicate the word in this text, which, strange to say, would seem the only possible word that has not heretofore been proposed. See Preface, pp. xviii–xx.

[43] *questionable* = to be questioned.

[48] *cerements* = shroud or grave clothes of waxed cloth.

Hor. No, by no means.
Ham. It will not speak; then will I follow it.
Hor. Do not, my lord.
Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again: I 'll follow it.
Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.
Ham. It waves me still.
Go on; I 'll follow thee.
Mar. You shall not go, my lord.
Ham. Hold off your hands.
Hor. Be rul'd; you shall not go.
Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.
By heaven, I 'll make a ghost of him that lets me!
I say, away! Go on; I 'll follow thee. [*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*
Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.
Mar. Let 's follow; 't is not fit thus to obey him.
Hor. Have after. To what issue will this come?
Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
Hor. Heaven will direct it.
Mar. Nay, let 's follow him. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *Another part of the platform.*

Enter Ghost *and* Hamlet.

Ham. Where wilt thou lead me? speak; I 'll go no further.
Ghost. Mark me.

---

[78] *deprive your sovereignty of reason:* a reckless inversion, for rhythm's sake, of "deprive your reason of sovereignty" (as in Sonnet CXXVI., "Time's fickle glass, his sickle hour"); or else an almost equally reckless use of "deprive," to mean take away.

[82] *artery.* Some notion of the occasional stumbling blocks through which editors of S. pick their way may be gathered from the quarto spelling of this word, *arture*, that is *ar-tur-e*.

[83] *Nemean lion:* the lion that Hercules overcame.

[85] *lets* = hinders, stops.

Ham. I will.
Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.
Ham. Alas, poor ghost!
Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.
Ham. Speak; I am bound to hear.
Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.
Ham. What?
Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine;
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, Hamlet, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love —
Ham. O God!
Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murther.
Ham. Murther!
Ghost. Murther most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange and unnatural.
Ham. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swit
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.
Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'T is given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

---

[11] *to fast in fires.* Hunger was believed to be one of the torments of hell.
[20] *porpentine.* S. knew no other name for the porcupine.
[23] *Lethe wharf* = the banks of Lethe, the river of oblivion.

Ham. O my prophetic soul!
Mine uncle!
Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts, —
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce! — won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd:
Cut off even in the blossom of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account

---

[52] *To those of mine.* This illogical construction is the result of mere carelessness. It was not English in S.'s day more than it is now.

[61] *secure* = without care, unsuspicious, and so unguarded.

[62] *hebenon* = perhaps henbane, perhaps ebony. S. himself was probably not very clear on the point, but used the word that would convey the meaning he intended.

[69] *eager:* sharp, sour.

[72] *lazar-like* = like one with measles or leprosy.

[77] *Unhousel'd* = without the last sacrament; *disappointed* = without proper appointment or preparation; *unanel'd* = without extreme unction.

With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught: leave her to heaven
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire:
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*
Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I 'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables, — meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least I 'm sure it may be so in Denmark: [*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is "Adieu, adieu! remember me."
I have sworn 't.
Mar. } *Hor.* } [*Within.*] My lord, my lord, —
Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet, —
Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him!
Ham. So be it!
Hor. [*Within.*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!
Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

---

[80] *O, horrible:* not improbably this line should be an exclamation by Hamlet.
[99] *fond records* = trivial, foolish memories.
[100] *saws* = adages, proverbs.
[107] *tables* = note-book; sometimes called a table-book: from *tabula* (Lat.) = a thin board covered with wax, for writing.

Enter Horatio *and* Marcellus.

Mar. How is 't, my noble lord?
Hor. What news, my lord?
Ham. O, wonderful!
Hor. Good my lord, tell it.
Ham. No; you 'll reveal it.
Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.
Mar. Nor I, my lord.
Ham. How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?
But you 'll be secret?
Hor. }
Mar. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.
Ham. There 's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he 's an arrant knave.
Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.
Ham. Why, right; you are i' th' right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you;
For every man has business and desire,
Such as it is; and for mine own poor part,
Look you, I 'll go pray.
Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.
Ham. I 'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, 'faith, heartily.
Hor. There 's no offence, my lord.
Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.
Hor. What is 't, my lord? we will.
Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.
Hor. }
Mar. } My lord, we will not.
Ham. Nay, but swear 't.
Hor. In faith,
My lord, not I.
Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.
Ham. Upon my sword.
Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

---

147 *upon my sword:* the handle and the hilt of the sword made a cross, and, besides, the sword itself was honored.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny?
Come on — you hear this fellow in the cellarage —
Consent to swear.
Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.
Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. *Hic et ubique?* then we 'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i' th' earth so fast?
A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.
Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!
Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.
But come;
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on,
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, an if we would,"
Or "If we list to speak," or "There be, an if they might,"
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me: this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
[*They raise their hands to heaven and kiss Hamlet's sword hilt.*
Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! — So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,

---

156 *Hic et ubique* = here and everywhere. (Lat.)

That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let 's go together. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I. *A room in* Polonius' *house.*

Enter Polonius *and* Reynaldo.

Pol. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.
Rey. I will, my lord.
Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.
Rey. My lord, I did intend it.
Pol. Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 't were, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, "I know his father and his friends,
And in part him:" do you mark this, Reynaldo?
Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.
Pol. "And in part him; but," you may say, "not well.
But, if 't be he I mean, he 's very wild;
Addicted so and so:" and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.
Rey. As gaming, my lord.
Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing: you may go so far.
Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.
Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That 's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly

---

[7] *Danskers.* So the Danes call themselves.
[11] *more nearer.* The double comparative and superlative are in constant use by S.
[29, 30] *another scandal . . . incontinency.* This is quite irreconcilable with lines 20 and 60; unless we are to take incontinency in a sense hitherto unsuspected, — inconstancy, that is, to one mistress.
[31] *quaintly* = with delicate contrivance.

That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.
Rey. But, my good lord, —
Pol. Wherefore should you do this?
Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.
Pol. Marry, sir, here 's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of wit:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 't were a thing a little soil'd i' th' working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd
He closes with you in this consequence;
"Good sir," or so, or "friend," or "gentleman,"
According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.
Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this — he does — what was I about to say? By the mass, I was about to say something: where did I leave?

Rey. At "closes in the consequence," at "friend or so," and "gentleman."

Pol. At "closes in the consequence," ay, marry;
He closes thus: "I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in 's rouse;
There falling out at tennis:" or perchance,
"I saw him enter such a house of sale,"
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out:
So by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?
Rey. My lord, I have.
Pol. God b' wi' you; fare you well.

---

[47] *addition* = style and title: the "handle" to his name.
[61] *Videlicet* = you may see, to wit. (Lat.)
[65] *windlasses* = circuitous ways.

Rey. Good my lord.
Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.
Rey. I shall, my lord.
Pol. And let him 'ply his music.
Rey. Well, my lord.
Pol. Farewell! [*Exit Reynaldo.*

Enter Ophelia.

How now, Ophelia! what 's the matter?
Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!
Pol. With what, in the name of God?
Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors, — he comes before me.
Pol. Mad for thy love?
Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But truly, I do fear it.
Pol. What said he?
Oph. He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm:
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last, a little shaking of mine arm
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being: that done, he lets me go:
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.
Pol. Come, go with me: I will go seek the King.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven

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[71] *in yourself* = toward yourself, — as a sort of monitor and representative of his father. Reynaldo was in the service of Polonius, but he was not a menial servant.

[73] *'ply his music* = apply, that is, study, practice his music: the customary use of "apply" in S.'s day

[80] *down-gyved* = hanging about his ankles, like gyves.

[95] *As it did seem:* the folio, "*That* it," etc., a modernization; *bulk* = body, exclusive of head and limbs, trunk.

That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
What, have you given him any hard words of late?
Oph. No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters and deni'd
His access to me.
Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgement
I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle,
And meant to wrack thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the King;
This must be known: which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide than hate to utter love.
Come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and* Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,
Sith nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And sith so neighbour'd to his youth and haviour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.
Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And sure I am two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile,

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[112] *quoted:* loosely used for "observed."
[6] *Sith* = since.
[22] *gentry* = gentleness, politeness, courtesy.

For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.
Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.
Guil. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.
King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.
Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz:
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.
Guil. Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!
Queen. Ay, amen!
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants.*

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Th' ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.
King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.
Pol. Have I, my lord? I assure my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king:
And I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.
King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.
Pol. Give first admittance to th' ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.
King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.
[*Exit Polonius.*
He tells me, my sweet queen, that he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.
Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main,
His father's death and our o'erhasty marriage.
King. Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter Polonius, *with* Voltimand *and* Cornelius.

Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?
Volt. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress

His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat griev'd,
That so his sickness, age and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown, [*Giving a paper.*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down.
King. It likes us well:
And at our more consider'd time we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour:
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
Most welcome home! [*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*
Pol. This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief: your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is 't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.
Queen. More matter, with less art.
Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 't is true: 't is true 't is pity;
And pity 't is 't is true; a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then: and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.

I have a daughter — have while she is mine —
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: now gather, and surmise. [*Reads.*

"To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia," —

That 's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is a vile phrase: but you shall hear. Thus: [*Reads.*

"In her excellent white bosom, these, etc."

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?
Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful. [*Reads.*

"Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.

"O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.
Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET."

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me,
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means and place,
All given to mine ear.
King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?
Pol. What do you think of me?
King. As of a man faithful and honourable.
Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing —
As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me — what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;
This must not be:" and then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed — a short tale to make —
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,

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[121] *this machine* = this frame, this body.
[133] *the desk or table-book*, by means of which they might communicate their love.
[138] *thy star* = thy sphere; thy scheme of nativity — with a mingling of astronomy and astrology.

Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.
King. Do you think 't is this?
Queen. It may be, very likely.
Pol. Hath there been such a time — I 'd fain know that —
That I have positively said "'T is so,"
When it prov'd otherwise?
King. Not that I know.
Pol. [*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*] Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.
King. How may we try it further?
Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together
Here in the lobby.
Queen. So he does indeed.
Pol. At such a time I 'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.
King. We will try it.
Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.
Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away:
I 'll board him presently. [*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*

Enter HAMLET, *reading.*

O, give me leave:
How does my good Lord Hamlet?
Ham. Well, God-a-mercy.
Pol. Do you know me, my lord?
Ham. Excellent well; you 're a fishmonger.
Pol. Not I, my lord.
Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.
Pol. Honest, my lord!
Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.
Pol. That 's very true, my lord.
Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion, — Have you a daughter?
Pol. I have, my lord.

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[156] *the centre*, of the earth.
[157] *four hours:* "four" was used in a general way, as we say half a dozen, meaning a small indefinite number; but perhaps S. wrote "for hours."
[178] *For if the sun*, etc. Hamlet probably reads, or pretends to read, this in his book.

Ham. Let her not walk i' th' sun: conception is a blessing: but as your daughter may conceive, friend, look to 't.

Pol. How say you by that? [*Aside.*] Still harping on my daughter: yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger: he is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffer'd much extremity for love; very near this. I 'll speak to him again. — What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

Pol. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't. — Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave.

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' th' air. [*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be deliver'd of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal: [*Aside.*] except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. [*To Polonius.*] God save you, sir! [*Exit Polonius.*

Guil. Mine honour'd lord!

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not over-happy;
On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoes?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favour?

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197 *should be old:* that is, as old, of my age.

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What 's the news?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world 's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near: but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark 's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one o' th' worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then, 't is none to you: for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why then, your ambition makes it one; 't is too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretch'd heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros.
Guil. } We 'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks: but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your

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260 *what make you?* = what do you?

modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no?

Ros. [*Aside to Guil.*] What say you?

Ham. [*Aside.*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to be a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust! Man delights not me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said "man delights not me"?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' th' sear; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for 't. What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

303 *coted* = overtook, came up beside: from the Fr. *cote* = side.

309 *tickle o' th' sear* = quick on the trigger, easily moved. The sear is that part of a gun-lock, upon which the trigger acts: and *tickle* = very sensitive to touch. The whole phrase was in use in S.'s time.

Ham. How chances it they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? are they so follow'd?

Ros. No, indeed, are they not.

Ham. How comes it? do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapp'd for 't: these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages — so they call them — that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players — as it is most like, if their means are no better — their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy; there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is 't possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.

Ham. It is not very strange; for mine uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father liv'd, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands: come then, the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should

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316 *inhibition* = exclusion; the *innovation* seems to have been the fashion of having child players, which about 1600 became the rage in London.

323 *eyases* = nestlings; *cry out on the top*, etc. = assert superiority. So below, "cried in the top of mine," line 412.

329 *escoted* = paid for; whence, pay scot.

335 *tarre* = set on, as dogs.

341 *Hercules and his load* = all the world, including our theatre. The sign of the Globe theatre was Hercules bearing the globe.

343 *make mows* = make mouths, make faces.

350 *comply* = use ceremony, compliment.

more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceiv'd.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. [*Aside to them.*] Hark you, Guildenstern! and you too: at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swadding-clouts.

Ros. Haply he 's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. [*Aloud.*] You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 't was so indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome, —

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon mine honour, —

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass, —

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why,

> "One fair daughter, and no more,
> The which he loved passing well."

Pol. [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i' th' right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

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[356] *a hawk from a handsaw:* an alliterative comparison in use in S.'s time, in which *handsaw* is a corruption of *heronshaw*, and *hawk* refers both to the bird of prey and to a cutting tool. See Preface, p. xxvi.

[370] *Buz, buz:* an exclamation of impatience at a tedious tale.

[377] *For the law of writ and the liberty:* these words allude to something known to S. and his audience, but unknown to us.

"As by lot, God wot,"

and then, you know,

"It came to pass, as most like it was," —

the first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my abridgement comes.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. O, my old friend! thy face is valanc'd since I saw thee last: com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! By 'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack'd within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We 'll e'en to 't like French falconers — fly at any thing we see: we 'll have a speech straight: come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

First Play. What speech, my lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleas'd not the million; 't was caviare to the general: but it was — as I received it, and others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top of mine — an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affection; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly lov'd: 't was Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: if it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see —
"The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast," — it is not so: it begins with Pyrrhus: —

"The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot

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[395] *chanson* = song. [Fr.]

[396] *abridgement:* the players cut Hamlet short, and "abridgement" also = pastime.

[400] *my young lady* = the young actor who played women's parts: there were no actresses in England until Charles II.'s time.

[402] *chopine* = a sort of high clog worn by women: an Italian fashion.

[403] *crack'd within the ring.* The old coins had a ring around the head of the monarch, and, being thin, they cracked; if within this ring, they would not pass. The cracking of the voice at adolescence is of course referred to.

[410] *caviare* = the well known Russian condiment made from sturgeon's roe, the taste for which is not general.

[414] *sallets* = sharp things, seasoned like salad.

[416] *affection* = affecting.

Now is he total gules; horribly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their lord's murther: roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

So, proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

First Play. "Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: unequal match'd
Pyrrhus at Priam drives: in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
Th' unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear; for, lo! his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' th' air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless and the orb below
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region, so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour forg'd for proof eterne
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!"

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard. Prithee, say on: he's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps: say on: come to Hecuba.

First Play. "But who, O, who had seen the mobled queen —"

Ham. "The mobled queen?"

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429 *gules* = red, an heraldic term.

434 *o'er-sized* = varnished, pasted over, as with size.

456 *the rack* = the clouds in the highest region.

469 *As low as to the fiends.* This speech is probably taken from the unsuccessful work of some fellow playwright of S.'s, whom he wished to console and praise.

474 *mobled* = with head wrapped up; whence, mob-cap.

Pol. That 's good; "mobled queen" is good.

First Play. " Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up:
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd:
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
Unless things mortal move them not at all,
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods."

Pol. Look, whe'er he has not turn'd his colour and has tears in 's eyes. Pray you, no more.

Ham. 'T is well; I 'll have thee speak out the rest soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? Do you hear, let them be well us'd; for they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time: after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodykins, man, much better: use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends: we 'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the Murder of Gonzago?

First Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We 'll ha 't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in 't, could you not?

First Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*] My good friends, I 'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

Ham. Ay, so, God b' wi' ye. [*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*] Now I am alone.
O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,

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[478] *bisson rheum* = blinding tears. See the widow, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, who was "an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum;" rheum was anything fluid cast off from the body.

[489] *milch* = milky, moist.

[491] *whe'er* = whether, as elsewhere.

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What 's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain, breaks my pate across,
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face,
Tweaks me by th' nose, gives me the lie i' th' throat,
As deep as to the lungs, who does me this,
Ha!
'Swounds, I should take it: for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal: bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of the dear murthered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play

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536 *John-a-dreams* = a dreamy, mooning Jack.

546 *lack gall:* pigeons and doves were supposed to be without gall in their bodies, and hence without bitterness in their dispositions.

550 *kindless* = without the feelings proper to man, to my kind.

558 *About, my brain.* But Hamlet has already thought of introducing the dozen or sixteen lines alluding to his father's murder.

Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murther, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I 'll have these players
Play something like the murther of my father
Before mine uncle: I 'll observe his looks;
I 'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the Devil: and the Devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me: I 'll have grounds
More relative than this: the play 's the thing
Wherein I 'll catch the conscience of the King. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?
Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.
Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.
Queen. Did he receive you well?
Ros. Most like a gentleman.
Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.
Ros. Most free of question; but, of our demands,
Niggard in his reply.
Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?
Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way: of these we told him;

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567 *tent* = probe.

13 *Most free of question.* The old copies have "Niggard of question," and in the next line, "Most free in his reply;" which is directly at variance not only with the fact, but, what is of much more importance where S. is concerned, with Guildenstern's description of Hamlet's conduct only five lines before, and Rosencrantz's, yet again before. Plainly there was an accidental transposition.

17 *o'er-raught* = overreached, overtook.

And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.
Pol. 'T is most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.
King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.
Ros. We shall, my lord. [*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 't were by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia:
Her father and myself, lawful espials,
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If 't be th' affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.
Queen. I shall obey you.
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.
Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit Queen.*
Pol. Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. [*To Ophelia.*] Read on this book;
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,—
'T is too much prov'd—that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The Devil himself.
King. O, 't is too true!
[*Aside.*] How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beauti'd with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burthen!
Pol. I hear him coming; let 's withdraw, my lord.
[*Exeunt King and Polonius.*

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31 *Affront* = meet face to face.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 't is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 't is a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die? to sleep?
To sleep perchance to dream: ay, there 's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there 's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sickli'd o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action. — Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.
Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?
Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.
Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

[76] *fardels* = burthens, packs. The folio has "*these* fardels," which, as referring to the burthens of life already enumerated by Hamlet, has a strong claim to be received as the true reading.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.
Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well you did;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord!

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners! I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where 's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in 's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I 'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well

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[104] *My lord!* It has been the practice to mark this with an interrogation point; but a dozen points of exclamation would fail to express Ophelia's astonishment and indignation as her lover, Prince Hamlet, asks her to her face if she is chaste. The thought of his madness comes up to her on his next two speeches, and she then answers him accordingly.

enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I 'll no more on 't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit*

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King *and* Polonius.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There 's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brain's still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on 't?

Pol. It shall do well: but yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;

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[143] *make your wantonness your ignorance* = make an assumed ignorance cover wanton speech.

[156] *blown youth* = blown into flower.

[157] *ecstasy* = madness, etc.

[159] *affections* = the affecting of his mind, his moods and purposes

We heard it all. My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief: let her be round with him;
And I 'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.
  King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A hall in the castle.*

Enter Hamlet *and* Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant: it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

First Play. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature: to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor Turk, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of

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[9] *groundlings* = those in the pit, who stood upon the ground.

[10] *are capable of* = can comprehend, understand,

[12] *Termagant*, a supposed god of the Saracens, was a stock personage in the old Moralities, in which he grinned and raved. So also was Herod, whose bombast and fury were monstrous and ridiculous.

nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

First Play. I hope we have reform'd that indifferently with us, sir.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that 's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.*

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the King hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the Queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. [*Exit Polonius.*] Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros. }
Guil. } We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Ham. What ho! Horatio.

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord, —

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart;
As I do thee. — Something too much of this. —
There is a play to-night before the King;

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[48] *conversation* = personal intercourse, associations and habits of life.

One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death:
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgements join
In censure of his seeming.
Hor. Well, my lord:
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.
Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
Get you a place.

Danish march. A flourish. Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-cramm'd: you cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius.*] My lord, you played once i' th' university, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. What did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was kill'd i' th' Capitol; Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here 's metal more attractive.

Pol. [*To the King.*] O, ho! do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap? [*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That 's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

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83 *be idle* = seem without serious purpose: as in "every idle word."

94 *Julius Cæsar:* perhaps an earlier play than this, in Latin or in English; but possibly S.'s own tragedy is meant. The dictator was not killed in the Capitol.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within 's two hours.

Oph. Nay, 't is twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the Devil wear black, for I 'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there 's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: but, by 'r lady, he must build churches, then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.

Enter a King *and a* Queen *very lovingly; the* Queen *embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in another man, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the* King's *ears, and exit. The* Queen *returns; finds the* King *dead, and makes passionate action. The* Poisoner, *with some two or three* Mutes, *comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The* Poisoner *wooes the* Queen *with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.* [*Exeunt.*

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they 'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you 'll show him: be not you asham'd to show, he 'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught: I 'll mark the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently. [*Exit*

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'T is brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

---

[114] *your only:* in modern phrase, "only your."

[116] *within 's* = within these.

[118] *for I'll have a suit of sables:* Hamlet drily and jocosely disappoints expectation, and declares in other phrase that he will do just as the Devil does.

[123] *the hobby-horse* was a figure (played by a man) in the morris dances.

[126] *miching mallecho:* a grotesque phrase made up of English and Spanish = secret mischief.

Enter two Players, King *and* Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.
P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women's fear and love holds quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know:
And as my love is sized, my fear is so:
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.
P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honor'd, belov'd; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou —
P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast!
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

Ham. [*Aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood.

P. Queen. The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.
P. King. I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 't is that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 't is not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 't is a question left us yet to prove,

---

140 *Full thirty times*, etc. This play within the play is written with great skill in the style of Shakespeare's predecessors, and was doubtless the cause of some of the sneers at him. Some editors have actually searched it for the twelve or sixteen lines that Hamlet speaks of introducing! There could be no vainer quest. Hamlet's declaration, it should not need to be said, is merely to prepare us for his finding a play exactly suited to his purposes; and this S. wrote *en bloc*.

Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourites flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend;
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown:
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed:
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.
P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well and it destroy!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now!

P. King. 'T is deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*
P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady protests too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she 'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' th' world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna. Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon: 't is a knavish piece of work: but what o' that? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the gall'd jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

---

[189] *his favourites flies.* This has been commonly changed to "favourite flies," much to the detriment of the descriptiveness of the passage. But here "flies" is not an instance of the old "third person plural in *s*." If it were not for the rhyme, the reading should be, and would rightly have been, "favourites fly."

[222] *Tropically* = by trope, figure of speech.

[224] *his wife, Baptista.* This name is borne by men in Italy, but it had a feminine ending which misled S.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer: pox! leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: "the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge."

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately. [*Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i' th' garden for 's estate. His name 's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian: you shall see anon how the murtherer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The King rises.

Ham. What, frighted with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light: away!

All. Lights, lights, lights! [*Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.*

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
So runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers — if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me — with two Provincial roses on my raz'd shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, ay.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very — pajock.

Hor. You might have rhym'd.

Ham. O good Horatio, I 'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning?

---

[230] *interpret:* puppet shows had an interpreter or chorus.

[259] *Provincial*=Provençal.

[260] *raz'd*=cut down, razeed; pumps.

[261] *half a share.* The fellows in a cry, or company, of players were paid by shares in the profits of the performances.

[266] *pajock*=peacock: pronounced *payoc*.

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders!
For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.
Come, some music!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The King, sir, —

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir: pronounce.

Guil. The Queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandement: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit 's diseas'd: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother. Therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say, —

Ros. Then thus she says; your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

---

275 *perdy=par Dieu.* (Fr.)

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, but sir, "While the grass grows," — the proverb is something musty.

Re-enter Players *with recorders.*

O, the recorders! let me see one. To withdraw with you: — why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'T is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most excellent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be play'd on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir.

Pol. My lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By th' mass, and it 's like a camel, indeed.

---

recorders: these were wind instruments, like large flageolets; they were of various sizes.

[322] *To withdraw with you* = a word aside with you. As in the case of Polonius, Hamlet protects the victims of his satire from the scorn of others their inferiors. S. imagined him a weak, imperfect, morbid creature, but a kind-hearted gentleman.

[336] *excellent music:* The quarto of 1604, commonly followed, has *eloquent*, etc. — a poor epithet for music.

[345] *'Sblood* = By his blood; but its full significance was lost even in S.'s day.

[347] *fret* = frets are pieces of metal on the neck of a viol or guitar which stop the vibration of the string, and so make the various notes of the scale.

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.
Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.
Ham. Or like a whale?
Pol. Very like a whale.
Ham. Then I will come to my mother by and by. [*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by and by.
Pol. I will say so.
Ham. By and by is easily said. [*Exit Polonius.*] Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*
'T is now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A room in the castle.*

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you;
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.
Guil. We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty.
Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from noyance; but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What 's near it with it. It is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,

---

[373] *shent* = harshly treated.
[11] *single and peculiar life* = that of a private person.

To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.
King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage:
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.
Ros.
Guil. } We will haste us.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Enter Polonius.

Pol. My lord, he 's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I 'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I 'll warrant she 'll tax him home:
And as you said, and wisely was it said,
'T is meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I 'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.
King. Thanks, dear my lord. [*Exit Polonius.*
O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murther. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what 's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I 'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murther?"
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murther,
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,

[29] *tax him home* = reproach him thoroughly; in homely phrase, scold him well.

And oft 't is seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 't is not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: what can it not?
Yet what can it when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I 'll do 't. — And so he goes to heaven;
And so am I reveng'd. That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'T is heavy with him: and am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

King. [*Rising.*] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [*Exit.*

---

[68] *limed* = caught as with bird-lime.

[88] *a more horrid hent* = a having, or opportunity, of a more horrid sort. It has been objected by some who vainly assume that Hamlet was meant for a perfect and altogether admirable man that this speech is unworthy of him. But it has no quality about it of good or bad in relation to malignancy. It is merely a procrastinating fetch of Hamlet's, a subtle manifestation of that intellectual dawdling and paltering to which he confesses to himself that he is wont.

Scene IV. *The* Queen's *closet.*

Enter Queen *and* Polonius.

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him:
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I 'll sconce me even here.
Pray you, be round with him.
Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother!
Queen. I 'll warrant you,
Fear me not: withdraw, I hear him coming.
[*Polonius hides behind the arras.*

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now, mother, what 's the matter?
Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.
Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.
Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.
Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.
Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!
Ham. What 's the matter now?
Queen. Have you forgot me?
Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And — would it were not so! — you are my mother.
Queen. Nay, then, I 'll set those to you that can speak.
Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.
Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murther me?
Help, help, ho!
Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help, help, help!
Ham. [*Drawing.*] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead! [*Makes a pass through the arras.*
Pol. [*Behind.*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies*
Queen. O me, what hast thou done?
Ham. Nay, I know not:
Is it the King?
Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!
Ham. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.
Queen. As kill a king!
Ham. Ay, lady, 't was my word.
[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

---

11 *idle tongue* = a vain, frivolous tongue. See Sc. 2, line 82.

I took thee for thy betters: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger. [*Drops the arras.*
Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,
And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff,
If damned custom have not brass'd it so
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.
Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?
Ham. Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.
Queen. Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?
Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it 's humble,
And waits upon the judgement: and what judgement
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion; but sure, that sense

---

[46] *contraction* = the marriage contract.
[52] *index.* The indexes of books used to be printed in the beginning instead of the end.
[67] *batten* = feed grossly fat.

Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was 't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn
And reason panders will.
Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.
Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty, —
Queen. O, speak to me no more;
These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet!
Ham. A murderer and a villain;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!
Queen. No more!
Ham. A king of shreds and patches, —

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?
Queen. Alas, he 's mad!

---

[79] *sans* = without. (Fr.)
[82] *Rebellious hell.* Perhaps we should read, rebellious heat. The misprint is easy.
[90] *grained spots:* dyed in the grain, so that they will not wash out.
[92] *enseamed:* "seam" means grease. This most revolting passage represents not S.'s thought but Hamlet's feeling.
[98] *a vice of kings* = a king like the Vice in the old Moralities.
Enter Ghost. The quarto of 1603, recording what the spectator saw, has *Enter Ghost in his night gown*, that is, in his dressing gown. Hamlet imagines that he sees his father in his customary dress in his private apartments, as he says afterwards "in his habit as he lived."

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!
Ghost. Do not forget: this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look, amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul:
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
Speak to her, Hamlet.
Ham. How is it with you, lady?
Queen. Alas, how is 't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with th' incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm,
Your bedded hairs, like life in excrements,
Start up, and stand an end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?
Ham. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.
Queen. To whom do you speak this?
Ham. Do you see nothing there?
Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.
Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?
Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.
Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal! [*Exit Ghost.*
Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.
Ham. Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music: it is not madness
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,

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[107] *laps'd in time and passion* = given up to delay and emotion.

[128] *convert my stern effects* = change my stern purpose, — another nascent excuse for flinching and procrastination.

[138] *ecstasy* = madness.

Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what 's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.
  Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.
  Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habits evil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either tame the devil or throw him out,
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I 'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord, [*Pointing to Polonius.*
I do repent: but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.
  Queen.   What shall I do?
  Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,

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[162] *Of habits evil:* that is, that monster, custom, who by mere repetition destroys (eats) all consciousness of evil in what is habitual, is also an angel because he gives in like manner, by habit, the livery, or sign of service, to good, etc.

[169] *And either:* After these words a monosyllable has been lost in the old copies. It might have been "tame," or (as Malone read) "curb," if that word did not occur a few lines above, but I feel sure not "quell," as Singer reads: that is too strong. To *tame* the devil is to *change* the stamp of nature.

Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'T were good you let him know;
For who, that 's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.
Queen. Be you assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.
Ham. I must to England; you know that?
Queen. Alack,
I had forgot: 't is so concluded on.
Ham. There 's letters seal'd: and my two schoolfellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 't is the sport to have the enginer
Hoist with his own petar: and 't shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 't is most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.
[This man shall set me packing:
I 'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.]
Mother, good night. [Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.] [*Exeunt severally: Hamlet dragging in Polonius.*

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[190] *paddock* = toad.

[193] *Unpeg the basket:* there is reference here to a manifestly well-known story in which an ape let birds out of a wicker cage on a housetop, got in himself, and being too heavy broke the basket away and fell. But no such story has been discovered.

[211] *This man*, etc. I am very sure that this speech according to S. ended thus:—

O, 't is most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.
Mother, good night,

with a rhyming tag and a final good night, and that the words enclosed thus [ ] are either from the old play, or were added by another and an inferior writer. But I cannot presume to omit them because, while the previous lines of the speech are found only in the quarto of 1604, these lines (211 to the end) not only appear both in the folio and the quarto of 1604, but in a mutilated form in the quarto of 1603. They were retained, it should seem, from the old play, or supplied to the stage, for their application to Hamlet's ugly "job" of dragging out the body of his victim, made necessary by the lack of shifting scenery on our early stage.

ACT IV.

Scene I. *A room in the castle.*

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, *and* Guildenstern.

King. There 's matter in these sighs; these profound heaves
You must translate: 't is fit we understand them.
Where is your son?
Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!
King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?
Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, "A rat, a rat!"
And, in his brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.
King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there;
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd and out of haunt,
This mad young man: but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?
Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.
King. O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:

25 *ore among a mineral of metals* = gold among ore of inferior metals.

Go seek him out; speak fair and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
Come, Gertrude, we 'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what 's untimely done: [so, haply, slander]
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Safely stowed.

Ros. *Guil.* [*Within.*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. What noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 't is kin.

Ros. Tell us where 't is, that we make take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the son of a king!

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir, that soaks up the King's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the King best service in the end: he keeps them, as an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouth'd, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have glean'd, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the King.

Ham. The body is with the King, but the King is not with the body. The King is a thing —

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[40] *so, haply, slander:* these words supply, by the happy conjecture of Theobald, a part of this line which had been lost.

[26] *The body is with the King*, etc. Hamlet keeps up his semblance of madness.

Guil. A thing, my lord!
Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter KING, *attended.*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He 's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes:
And where 't is so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are reliev'd
Or not at all.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

How now! what hath befall'n?
Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.
King. But where is he?
Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.
King. Bring him before us.
Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where 's Polonius?
Ham. At supper.
King. At supper! where?
Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet; we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table: that 's the end.
King. Alas, alas!
Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.
King. What dost thou mean by this?
Ham. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.
King. Where is Polonius?
Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' th' other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

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22 *emperor for diet;* a whimsical allusion to the Diet of Worms is manifest.

King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*
Ham. He will stay till ye come. [*Exeunt Attendants.*
King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, —
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, — must send thee hence
With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.
Ham. For England!
King. Ay, Hamlet.
Ham. Good.
King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. But, come; for England! Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England! [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;
Delay it not; I 'll have him hence to-night:
Away! for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair: pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught —
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us — thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters congruing to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: till I know 't is done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit.*

Scene IV. *A plain in Denmark.*

Enter Fortinbras, *a* Captain, *and* Soldiers, *marching.*

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king!
Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
Craves the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.

[6] *in his eye* = in his presence.

Cap. I will do 't, my lord.
For. Go softly on. [*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*

Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and others.*

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?
Cap. They are of Norway, sir.
Ham. How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?
Cap. Against some part of Poland.
Ham. Who commands them, sir?
Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.
Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?
Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it:
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.
Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.
Cap. Yes, 't is already garrison'd.
Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.
Cap. God b' wi' you, sir. [*Exit.*
Ros. Will 't please you go, my lord?
Ham. I 'll be with you straight. Go a little before.
[*Exeunt all except Hamlet.*
How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge? What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward, I do not know
Why yet I live to say "This thing 's to do:"
Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me:
Witness this army of such mass and charge

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27 *imposthume* = an internal swelling.
34 *market* = business
39 *fust* = mould, grow stale.

Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
Makes mouths at the invisible event,
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour 's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *Elsinore. A room in the castle.*

Enter QUEEN, HORATIO, *and a* Gentleman.

Queen. I will not speak with her.
Hor. She is importunate, indeed distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.
Queen. What would she have?
Gent. She speaks much of her father; says she hears
There 's tricks i' th' world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection: they aim at it;
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.
Hor. 'T were good she were spoken with; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.
Queen. Let her come in. [*Exit Gentleman*
[*Aside.*] To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:

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64 *continent* = containing place.
6 *enviously* = maliciously, mischievously.
9 *to collection* = to gathering up the meaning.

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Enter Ophelia.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?
Queen. How now, Ophelia!

Oph. [*Sings.*] How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.

O ho!
Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?
Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

[*Sings.*] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf
At his heels a stone.

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia, —
Oph. Pray you, mark.

[*Sings.*] White his shroud as the mountain snow, —

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. [*Sings.*] Larded with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let 's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[*Sings.*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.
Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber-door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

Enter Ophelia. Thus the quarto of 1604; the folio, *Enter Ophelia distracted;* the quarto of 1603, *Enter Ophelia playing on a lute, and her hair down singing.*

[26] *shoon* = shoes. The old English plural which, with *housen* for houses, I have heard in my boyhood, among the Yankees of Long Island. The cockle hat (hat with a cockle shell on it) and the sandal shoon were signs of pilgrimage, and were often assumed as disguises by lovers.

[42] *a baker's daughter:* referring to an old legend that a baker's daughter grudged Christ some bread, and cried Heugh! heugh! at him, and he in revenge turned her into an owl.

[53] *dupp'd:* the perfect tense of *dup;* a compressed form of *do up.*

King. Pretty Ophelia!
Oph. Indeed, la, without an oath, I 'll make an end on 't:

[*Sings.*] By Gis and by Saint Charity,
  Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do 't, if they come to 't;
  By cock, they are to blame.
Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
  You promis'd me to wed.

He answers.

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
  An thou hadst not come to my bed.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' th' cold ground. My brother shall know of it: and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch,
I pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*
O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain:
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgement,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts:
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France;
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*
Queen. Alack, what noise is this?
King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.

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[83] *hugger-mugger* = secrecy and haste.

[94] *murdering-piece* = a kind of cannon which was loaded with many balls or other missiles.

[96] *Switzers:* the Swiss for hundreds of years served as mercenary soldiers in various countries of Europe.

Enter a Gentleman.

What is the matter?
Gent. Save yourself, my lord:
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
(The ratifiers and props of every work,)
They cry "Choose we: Laertes shall be king:"
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds:
"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"
Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!
King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter Laertes, *armed;* Danes *following*

Laer. Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all without.
Danes. No, let 's come in.
Laer. I pray you, give me leave.
Danes. We will, we will. [*They retire without the door.*
Laer. I thank you: keep the door. O thou vile king,
Give me my father!
Queen. Calmly, good Laertes. [*Laying hold of him.*
Laer. That drop of blood that 's calm proclaims me bastard,
Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brows
Of my true mother.
King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There 's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd. Let him go, Gertrude.
Speak, man.
Laer. Where is my father?
King. Dead.
Queen. But not by him.
King. Let him demand his fill.
Laer. How came he dead? I 'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!

---

109 *counter:* dogs hunt counter when they follow the scent backward instead of forward.

I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I 'll be reveng'd
Most throughly for my father.
King. Who shall stay you?
Laer. My will, not all the world:
And for my means, I 'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.
King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is 't writ in your revenge,
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?
Laer. None but his enemies.
King. Will you know them then?
Laer. To his good friends thus wide I 'll ope my arms;
And like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,
Repast them with my blood.
King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgement pierce
As day does to your eye.
Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.
Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! is 't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love, and where 't is fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. [*Sings.*] They bore him barefac'd on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;
And in his grave rain'd many a tear:—

Fare you well, my dove!
Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

---

160 *Nature is fine in love.* Somewhat obscure; but the sense unmistakable: *fine* = sensitive; *instance* = proof, example. Ophelia's sensitiveness of nature has caused her reason to follow her father.

Oph. [*Sings.*] You must sing a-down a-down,
An you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing 's more than matter.

Oph. There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance; pray, love, remember: and there is pansies, that 's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There 's fennel for you, and columbines: there 's rue for you; and here 's some for me: we may call it herb-grace o' Sundays: O, you must wear your rue with a difference. There 's a daisy: I would give you some violets, but they wither'd all when my father died: they say he made a good end, —

[*Sings.*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness

Oph. [*Sings.*] And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead:
Go to thy death-bed:
He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan:
God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God b' wi' ye. [*Exit.*

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction: but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so;

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[171] *the wheel* = perhaps the spinning wheel at which the song was sung, or a burthen called the wheel. Neither explanation is quite satisfactory.

[176] *document* = precept, that which instructs: the radical sense.

[179] *herb-grace:* a common name for rue.

[180] *a difference:* the figures, or charges, borne on the same coats of arms by various members of the same family, to distinguish them, are called differences.

His means of death, his obscure burial —
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation —
Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question.
King. So you shall;
And where th' offence is let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter HORATIO *and a* Servant.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?
Serv. Sailors, sir: they say they have letters for you.
Hor. Let them come in. [*Exit Servant.*
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

First Sail. God bless you, sir.
Hor. Let him bless thee too.
First Sail. He shall, sir, an 't please him. There 's a letter for you, sir: it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*Reads.*] "Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the King: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy: but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the King have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldest fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.
"He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET."

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do 't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt*

SCENE VII. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter KING *and* LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal.
And you must put me in your heart for friend,

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[210] *hatchment* = a cloth with armorial bearings painted on it, used at funerals.
[11] *overlooked* = looked over.
[17] *they knew what they did* = they "knew what they were about," that it would be a good thing for them to serve Hamlet.

Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursu'd my life.
Laer. It well appears: but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.
King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The Queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself —
My virtue or my plague, be it either which —
She 's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.
Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections: but my revenge will come.
King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more;
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine —

Enter a Messenger.

How now! what news?
Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the Queen.
King. From Hamlet! who brought them?
Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:
They were given me by Claudio; he receiv'd them
Of him that brought them.

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[3] *Sith* = since.

[15] *sphere* = orbit.

[18] *gender* = kind, sort: loosely used: enough that it had some relation to the idea to be expressed, and suited the rhythm of the verse.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.
Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*

[*Reads.*] "High and mighty, You shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return. HAMLET."

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?
Laer. Know you the hand?
King. 'T is Hamlet's character. "Naked!"
And in a postscript here, he says "alone."
Can you advise me?
Laer. I 'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus didest thou."
King. If it be so, Laertes —
As how should it be so? how otherwise? —
Will you be rul'd by me?
Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.
King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.
Laer. My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.
King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.
Laer. What part is that, my lord?
King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears

---

60 *checking at:* when a hawk in pursuit of one bird turned aside and made a dash at another, she was said to check at it.
65 *uncharge the practice* = disbelieve the plot.
74 *siege* = seat, degree, rank.

Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy : —
I 've seen myself, and served against, the French,
And they can well on horseback : but this gallant
Had witchcraft in 't ; he grew unto his seat ;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast : so far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.
Laer. A Norman, was 't?
King. A Norman.
Laer. Upon my life, Lamont.
King. The very same.
Laer. I know him well : he is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation.
King. He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 't would be a sight indeed,
If one could match you ; th' escrimers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this, —
Laer. What out of this, my lord?
King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?
Laer. Why ask you this?
King. Not that I think you did not love your father ;
But that I know love is begun by time ;
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it ;
And nothing is at a like goodness still ;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too much : that we would do,

[79] *Importing* = bearing bestowing.
[98] *escrimers* = fencers (*escrimeurs*, Fr.).
[115] *plurisy* : misused for plethora.

We should do when we would; for this "would" changes
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' th' ulcer: —
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?
Laer. To cut his throat i' th' church.
King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home:
We 'll put on those shall praise your excellence
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together
And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.
Laer. I will do 't:
And, for that purpose, I 'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
That is but scratch'd withal: I 'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.
King. Let 's further think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape: if this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'T were better not assay'd: therefore this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof. Soft! let me see:
We 'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings:
I ha 't:
When in your motion you are hot and dry —

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120 *spendthrift sigh* = a sigh that wastes life, according to the old superstition.
125 *sanctuarize:* a word which S. seems to have made for the nonce.
136 *unbated* = without a button. *pass of practice* = a thrust in foul play: *practice* = bad practice.

As make your bouts more violent to that end —
And that he calls for drink, I 'll have prepar'd him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen!
Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow: your sister 's drown'd, Laertes.
Laer. Drown'd! O, where?
Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.
Laer. Alas, then, she is drown'd?
Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.
Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will; when these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord:
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*
King. Let 's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore let 's follow. [*Exeunt.*

157 *prepar'd him* = for him, with a dative sense, as in "mixed him a dose."
158 *for the nonce* = for the occasion, the once.
168 *liberal* = free-spoken.
187 *The woman* = the tears of woman.
189 *douts* = does out, extinguishes.

ACT V.

SCENE I. *A churchyard.*

Enter two Clowns, *with spades and pickaxes.*

First Clo. Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

Sec. Clo. I tell thee she is; and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

First Clo. How can that be, unless she drown'd herself in her own defence?

Sec. Clo. Why, 't is found so.

First Clo. It must be "*se offendendo:*" it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, to perform: argal, she drown'd herself wittingly.

Sec. Clo. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver, —

First Clo. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes, — mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

Sec. Clo. But is this law?

First Clo. Ay, marry, is 't; crowner's quest law.

Sec. Clo. Will you ha' the truth on 't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

First Clo. Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession.

Sec. Clo. Was he a gentleman?

First Clo. He was the first that ever bore arms.

Sec. Clo. Why, he had none.

First Clo. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says "Adam digg'd:" could he

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[4] *straight* = straightway, directly.

[9] *offendendo:* the clown's blunder for *defendendo*, as *argal* is for *ergo*.

[23] *out o' Christian burial.* The Christianity of S.'s time prescribed that one who ended his own life should be buried without service, at cross roads, with a stake driven through his heart.

[27] *even Christian* = fellow Christian.

dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself —

Sec. Clo. Go to.

First Clo. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

Sec. Clo. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

First Clo. I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again, come.

Sec. Clo. "Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?"

First Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Sec. Clo. Marry, now I can tell.

First Clo. To 't.

Sec. Clo. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO, *at a distance.*

First Clo. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are ask'd this question next, say "a grave-maker:" the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan: fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit Sec. Clown.*

[*He digs, and sings.*

In youth, when I did love, did love,
  Methought it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove,
  O, methought, there was nothing meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'T is e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

First Clo. [*Sings.*]

But age, with his stealing steps,
  Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land,
  As if I had never been such. [*Throws up a skull.*

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once:

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[49] *unyoke* = stop work.

[56] *Yaughan.* Probably the name of the keeper of a well known ale-house near the Globe Theatre. It may have been Yaughan, which is Welsh; or that may be merely a spelling of Johan (which would be pronounced gutturally Yohan) and which was the name of a man who kept a tavern hard by the Globe. The matter is of small importance.

[58] *In youth,* etc. The three stanzas sung by the clown are from a song in Tottel's *Miscellany*, published in 1557. But he garbles the text grievously.

[69] *intil* = into.

how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jawbone, that did the first murther! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say "Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that prais'd my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knock'd about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: here 's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on 't.

First Clo. [*Sings.*]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
 For and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
 For such a guest is meet. [*Thows up another skull.*

Ham. There 's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in 's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave 's this, sirrah?

First Clo. Mine, sir.

[*Sings.*] O, a pit of clay for to be made
 For such a guest is meet.

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85 *loggats:* a game in which small logs of wood, loggats, are thrown at a jack.

98 *the fine of his fines* =the end of his fines: *fine* as in *final.*

101 *a pair of indentures:* indentures being in duplicate, one to be kept by each party, were both written on one sheet of parchment, which was then cut in two on an indented line, whence the name. The pair must of course fit exactly into each other on this line.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in 't.

First Clo. You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine: 't is for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

First Clo. 'T is a quick lie, sir; 't will away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

First Clo. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

First Clo. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

First Clo. One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she 's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken a note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

First Clo. Of all the days i' th' year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

First Clo. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clo. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it 's no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

First Clo. 'T will not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

First Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

First Clo. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

First Clo. Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot?

First Clo. I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die — as we have many pocky corses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in — he will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

116 *the quick* = the living: "to judge the quick and the dead."
126 *absolute* = positive, precise and dogmatic.
130 *kibe* = a chilblain, or tender spot on the heel.
135 *young Hamlet* = Hamlet the son.

Ham. Why he more than another?

First Clo. Why, sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here 's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

First Clo. A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

First Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' pour'd a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, this same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the King's jester.

Ham. This?

First Clo. E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred my imagination is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What 's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' th' earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? puh! [*Puts down the skull.*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'T were to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!
But soft! but soft! awhile: here comes the King.

Enter Priests, *etc., in procession ; the Corpse of* Ophelia, Laertes *and* Mourners *following ;* King, Queen, *their trains, etc.*

The Queen, the courtiers: who is that they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it own life: 't was of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark. [*Retiring with Horatio.*
Laer. What ceremony else?
Ham. That is Laertes,
A very noble youth: mark.
Laer. What ceremony else?
First Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her:
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin rites,
Her maiden strewments and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.
Laer. Must there no more be done?
First Priest. No more be done:
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.
Laer. Lay her i' th' earth:
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.
Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!
Queen. Sweets to the sweet: farewell! [*Scattering flowers.*
I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.
Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms: [*Leaps into the grave.*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

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[203] *it own life* = its own life. The possessive form *its* was slowly coming into use in S.'s day. *estate* = rank.

[214] *her virgin rites:* so the folio; the quarto, virgin *crants*, which, *Krantz* being Ger for a garland, some editors have retained.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet, the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*
Laer. The Devil take thy soul! [*Grappling with him.*
Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not spleenative and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wiseness fear: hold off thy hand.
King. Pluck them asunder.
Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!
All. Gentlemen, —
Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.
[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*
Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.
Queen. O my son, what theme?
Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?
King. O, he is mad, Laertes.
Queen. For love of God, forbear him.
Ham. 'Swounds, show me what thou 'lt do:
Woo 't weep? woo 't fight? woo 't fast? woo 't tear thyself?
Woo 't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
I 'll do 't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou 'lt mouth,
I 'll rant as well as thou.
Queen. This is mere madness;
And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping.

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[240] *Hamlet, the Dane.* Hamlet here asserts himself as rightful King of Denmark.
[243] *spleenative* = filled with spleen; of old the supposed cause of anger.
[257] *Woo 't:* a rude colloquial form of "wilt thou," used by Hamlet in derisive scorn.
[258] *eisel:* of unknown meaning, unless it means vinegar. Printed *Esill* and *Esile* in the quartos and folio, it has been supposed to be the name of some unknown river.
[269] *her golden couplets:* the dove has but two nestlings, which at first are covered with yellow down, and over these she broods constantly for the first few days, not trusting her mate, and leaving them but for a moment to get necessary food.

Ham. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*
King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him. [*Exit Horatio.*
[*To Laertes.*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We 'll put the matter to the present push.
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A hall in the castle.*

Enter Hamlet *and* Horatio.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other;
You do remember all the circumstance?
Hor. Remember it, my lord!
Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,—
And prais'd be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us
There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,—
Hor. That is most certain.
Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them; had my desire;
Finger'd their packet; and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again, making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,—
O royal knavery!—an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,

[1, 4] *sir:* This formal courtesy (which Hamlet has not used to Horatio since their first meeting) indicates no change of feeling toward his friend on the Prince's part, nor any assumption of superior rank, but a slight and momentary hardening of his heart in recollecting what he is about to relate.

[6] *mutines in the bilboes: mutines* = mutineers; *bilboes* = fetters made by rings running on iron rods, used on shipboard, and manufactured in Bilboa, Spain, like the bilboa blades: whence their name.

[12] *Up from my cabin.* From "Rashly," line 6, to these words all is parenthetical.

[13] *sea-gown* = a short, short-sleeved gown worn on shipboard.

With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.
Hor. Is 't possible?
Ham. Here 's the commission: read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?
Hor. I beseech you.
Ham. Being thus be-netted round with villanies, —
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play — I sat me down,
Devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning, but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service: wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?
Hor. Ay, good my lord.
Ham. An earnest conjuration from the King,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like *as*-es of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving time allow'd.
Hor. How was this seal'd?
Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other,
Subscrib'd it, gave 't the impression, plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.
Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.
Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:

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[22] *bugs* = terrible things.
[33] *statists* = statesmen.
[36] *yeoman's service* = service like that which a yeoman owed to his lord.
[42] *a comma:* a very perplexing word; not improbably a misprint of "cement:" but as *comma* is a connecting as well as a separative point in a sentence, the old reading cannot safely be disturbed.

'T is dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.
Hor. Why, what a king is this!
Ham. Does it not, thinks thee, stand me now upon —
He that hath kill'd my king and whor'd my mother,
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage — is 't perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm; and is 't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?
Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.
Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life 's no more than to say "One."
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I 'll court his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.
Hor. Peace! who comes here?

Enter OSRIC.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. — Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 't is a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the King's mess: 't is a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Your bonnet to his right use; 't is for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 't is very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, — as 't were, — I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify

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[63] *thinks thee* = seem to thee, as in "methinks." *stand me now upon* = become my duty.
[74] *to say One* = one pass with the rapier, as at fencing.
[87] *chough* = a sort of magpie.
[95] *my complexion* = my constitution.

to you that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter, —

Ham. I beseech you, remember —

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is 't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do 't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all 's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant —

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir?

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is —

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he 's unfellowed.

Ham. What 's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That 's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The King, sir, hath wag'd with him six Barbary horses:

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[101] *remember:* that is, remember thy courtesy: as in *Love's Labour 's Lost*, Act V. Sc. 1, line 103.

[110] *yaw:* an obsolete sailor's phrase = not answering the helm; the verb *yaw*, as in "yaw about," is still in use. But to explain Hamlet's talk or Osric's in this scene would do more than dizzy the arithmetic of memory: it would spoil the scene for those who can enjoy it.

against the which he has impon'd, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit. 143

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that 's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this "impon'd," as you call it? 153

Osr. The King, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How if I answer no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall; if it please his majesty, 't is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Your, yours. [*Exit Osric.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for 's turn. 170

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug, before he suck'd it. Thus has he — and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dotes on — only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

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139 *impon'd:* so the folio: the quarto of 1604, *impaund:* either word is suitable, and the difference not worth discussion.

141 *very dear to fancy* = very precious, according to the Osric of our day. In time names change a little; men it would seem not at all.

145 *edified by the margent:* by the explanatory notes upon the margin.

161 *breathing time* = time for exercise.

172 *comply* = pass compliments.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the King's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The King and Queen and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all 's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord, —

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury: there 's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 't is not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is 't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, *and* Attendants *with foils, etc.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.*

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I 've done you wrong;
But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was 't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he 's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness: if 't be so,

[197] *gain-giving:* a strange compound, possibly used for against-giving, misgiving.

[204] *Since no man has aught*, etc.: The "it" of this speech might refer to retribution for the murder of Hamlet's father; but this passage shows that he is dreamily thinking about himself and his own death.

Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.
Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour
I stand aloof; and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.
Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.
Laer. Come, one for me.
Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' th' darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.
Laer. You mock me, sir.
Ham. No, by this hand.
King. Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?
Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' th' weaker side.
King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.
Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.
Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length?
[*They prepare to play.*
Osr. Ay, my good lord.
King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

253 *an union* = a pearl of great price.

The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
"Now the King drinks to Hamlet." Come, begin:
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.
Ham. Come on, sir.
Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*
Ham. One.
Laer. No.
Ham. Judgement.
Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.
Laer. Well; again.
King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine:
Here 's to thy health. [*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*
Give him the cup.
Ham. I 'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?
Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.
King. Our son shall win.
Queen. He 's fat, and scant of breath.
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:
The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.
Ham. Good madam!
King. Gertrude, do not drink.
Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.
King. [*Aside.*] It is the poison'd cup: it is too late.
Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.
Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.
Laer. My lord, I 'll hit him now.
King. I do not think 't.
Laer. [*Aside.*] And yet 't is almost 'gainst my conscience.
Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally;
I pray you, pass with your best violence;
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.
Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*
Osr. Nothing, neither way.
Laer. Have at you now!

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*

King. Part them; they are incens'd.
Ham. Nay, come, again. [*The Queen falls.*
Osr. Look to the Queen there, ho!
Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord!
Osr. How is 't, Laertes?
Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

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268 *He 's fat:* Burbadge, the first Hamlet, was a portly man.
280 *a wanton* = a trifler.

Ham. How does the Queen?
King. She swounds to see them bleed.
Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink, — O my dear Hamlet, —
The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. [*Dies*
Ham. O villany! Ho! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! Seek it out.
Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good;
In thee there is not half an hour of life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again: thy mother 's poison'd:
I can no more: the King, the King 's to blame.
Ham. The point! — envenom'd too!
Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the King*
All. Treason! treason!
King. O, yet defend me friends; I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
Follow my mother. [*King dies.*
Laer. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*
Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time — as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest — O, I could tell you —
But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.
Hor. Never believe it:
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
Here 's yet some liquor left.
Ham. As thou 'rt a man,
Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I 'll have 't.
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. [*March afar off, and shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To th' ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.
Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited. The rest is silence. [*Dies.*
Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

Enter Fortinbras, *the* English Ambassadors, *and others.*

Fort. Where is this sight?
Hor. What is it ye would see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your speech.
Fort. This quarry cries on havoc. O proud death,
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?
First Amb. The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his command'ment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?
Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you:
He never gave command'ment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgements, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.
Fort. Let us haste to hear it,

[338] *the occurrents*, etc. = the occurrences which have brought all this about.

[345] *cries on* = cries out. The quarry (= the heap of dead) proclaims the havoc that has been made.

[353] *Not from his mouth* = not from the King's.

And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.
Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen.
Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies: such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*A dead march. Exeunt bearing off the dead bodies: after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*

KING LEAR.

INTRODUCTION.

THE story of King Lear and his three daughters is one of the oldest known to English literature, and one of those which seem to have taken strongest hold of the popular mind. It has been told in verse and in prose by many writers, beginning with Geoffrey of Monmouth, in the twelfth century; but all their tales are now forgotten, except as illustrations of this tragedy. Shakespeare, in writing it, went to Holinshed, as his custom was when he chose an English (in this case a British) subject to work upon; but with the incidents that he found there he interwove, as a secondary plot, those of the story of "a Paphlagonian unkind King," which he found in Sidney's *Arcadia*. He had, however, a predecessor in the dramatization of this favorite legend. A *Chronicle History of King Leir,* written for the London stage about 1593, had been performed with some success, we may presume; for it was published in 1605, if not before. This is a very dull performance, as a whole; but it is not without merit for its time; and that Shakespeare was acquainted with it, and indebted to it for some important hints, particularly in the characters of Lear, Cordelia, and Kent, can hardly be doubted. The date of the composition of Shakespeare's drama is fixable with unusual exactness. All the evidence points to the year 1605. The tragedy was very successful; and in 1608 two editions of it were published in quarto. It is impossible to tell which of these was the first; but whichever it was, the other is not a mere reprint of it. Their unlikeness is various and important. The text of the folio of 1623 differs from that of both the quartos, and is very much better. There is good reason for believing that it was printed from an independent manuscript. But although it contains fifty lines not found in the quartos, it lacks more than two hundred of undoubtable authenticity, which they contain, and it probably represents the latest acting copy of the tragedy. Few of Shakespeare's dramas contain passages in which his daring and reckless use of language does more to obscure his meaning; but no one of them equals it in grandeur and in power, and no one of them, except, perhaps, *Othello*, surpasses it in dramatic interest. The period of its action is quite indeterminable.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Lear, *King of Britain.*
King of France.
Duke of Burgundy.
Duke of Cornwall.
Duke of Albany.
Earl of Kent.
Earl of Gloucester.
Edgar, *son to Gloucester.*
Edmund, *bastard son to Gloucester.*
Curan, *a courtier.*
Old Man, *tenant to Gloucester.*
Doctor.
Fool.

Oswald, *steward to Goneril.*
A Captain employed by Edmund.
Gentleman attendant on Cordelia.
A Herald.
Servants to Cornwall.

Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, } *daughters to Lear.*

Knights of Lear's train, Captains, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

Scene: Britain.

Scene: Britain. Not England. It must constantly be remembered that the British personages in this tragedy are (historically) not Englishmen, and that the action takes place at a time long before there were any Englishmen in Britain: this notwithstanding much confusion of titles and of manners.

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I. KING LEAR'S *palace.*

Enter KENT, GLOUCESTER, *and* EDMUND.

Kent. I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Glou. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weigh'd, that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glou. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd to it.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Glou. Sir, this young fellow's mother could: whereupon she grew round-womb'd, and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle, ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glou. But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glou. My Lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glou. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. The King is coming.

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[15] *proper* = fitly made handsome.

[23] *out nine years* = nine years abroad.

Sennet. *Enter* KING LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Glou'ster.
Glou. I shall, my liege. [*Exeunt Gloucester and Edmund.*
Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.
Give me the map there. Know that we have divided
In three our kingdom: and 't is our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age;
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburthen'd crawl toward death. Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my daughters,—
Since now we will divest us, both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state,—
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.
Gon. Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found:
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.
Cor. [*Aside.*] What shall Cordelia do? Love and be silent.
Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady: to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall. Speak.
Reg. Sir, I am made
Of the self-same metal that my sister is,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,

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[52] *space and liberty:* these words express one idea, that of the most unrestrained freedom of thought and action.

[60] *champains: champain, champagne,* and *campagna* are to all intents and purposes one word, meaning an open level country.

Which the most precious square of sense possesses;
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.
Cor. [*Aside.*] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love 's
More richer than my tongue.
Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril. Now, our joy,
Although our last and least; to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interess'd; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.
Cor. Nothing, my lord.
Lear. Nothing!
Cor. Nothing.
Lear. Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.
Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
According to my bond; nor more nor less.
Lear. How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.
Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit;
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.
Lear. But goes thy heart with this?
Cor. Ay, good my lord.
Lear. So young, and so untender?
Cor. So young, my lord, and true.
Lear. Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy dower:
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;
By all the operation of the orbs

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[71] *precious square of sense:* a very perplexing phrase. "Square of sense" may mean the complete domain (as square and round both express completeness) of sensation, and "precious" may express the high value of such a completeness. Perhaps S. wrote, "spacious square or sphere of sense" = the vast domain of sensation.

[82] *interess'd* = concerned, involved. The old text has *interest*, which perhaps should be retained, as loosely used in its ordinary and obvious sense.

From whom we do exist, and cease to be;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, piti'd, and reliev'd,
As thou my sometime daughter.
Kent. Good my liege, —
Lear. Peace, Kent!
Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery. [*To Cord.*] Hence, and avoid my sight! —
So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her! Call France. — Who stirs?
Call Burgundy. Cornwall and Albany,
With my two daughters' dowers digest this third:
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
I do invest you jointly with my power,
Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly course,
With reservation of an hundred knights,
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain
The name, and all the additions to a king;
The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours: which to confirm,
This coronet part betwixt you. [*Giving the crown.*
Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers, —
Lear. The bow is bent and drawn; make from the shaft.
Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly
When Lear is mad. What wilt thou do, old man?
Thinkst thou that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour 's bound,
When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom;
And, in thy best consideration, check
This hideous rashness; answer my life my judgement,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;

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[114] *messes* = food, eats his children. Portions served at table to those who ate together were called messes. Whence the army mess-table.

[123] *who stirs? :* an outbreak of Lear's impatient arrogance.

[125] *digest* = dissolve.

Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness.
Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.
Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thy enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.
Lear. Out of my sight!
Kent. See better, Lear; and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.
Lear. Now, by Apollo, —
Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.
Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!
[*Laying his hand on his sword.*
Alb.
Corn. } Dear sir, forbear.
Kent. Do:
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon thy foul disease. Revoke thy doom;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I 'll tell thee thou dost evil.
Lear. Hear me, recreant! On thine allegiance, hear me!
That thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
Which we durst never yet, and with strain'd pride
To come between our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee, for provision
To shield thee from diseases of the world;
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death. Away! by Jupiter,
This shall not be revok'd.
Kent. Fare thee well, king: sith thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.
[*To Cordelia.*] The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said!
[*To Regan and Goneril.*] And your large speeches may your deeds approve,

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[151] *Reverbs* = reverberates; one of those words which S. never hesitated to make to suit his purpose or his ease.

[157] *by Apollo:* Lear swears like a pagan. S. must have kept in mind a time before that of the introduction of Christianity into Britain.

[164] *evil:* a monosyllable, pronounced *eel;* and in the next line *recreant* is a dissyllable.

[166] *That thou hast sought* = since thou, etc.

[172] *diseases* = discomforts, lack of ease.

[178] *sith* = since.

That good effects may spring from words of love.
Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
He 'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*

Flourish. Re-enter GLOUCESTER, *with* FRANCE, BURGUNDY, *and* Attendants.

Glou. Here 's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.
Lear. My Lord of Burgundy,
We first address towards you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter: what, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love?
Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than what your highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.
Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands;
If aught within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
She 's there, and she is yours.
Bur. I know no answer.
Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes,
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?
Bur. Pardon me, royal sir;
Election makes not up on such conditions.
Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made me,
I tell you all her wealth. [*To France.*] For you, great king,
I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
To avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost to acknowledge hers.
France. This is most strange,
That she, that even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Falls into taint: which to believe of her,

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[198] *like* = suit, please.

[200] *owes* = owns, possesses.

[219] *Falls into taint;* the reproach is against the purity of Lear's affection, unless Cordelia had committed some monstrous offence; which France could not believe.

Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Could never plant in me.
Cor. I yet beseech your majesty, —
If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not; since what I well intend,
I 'll do 't before I speak, — that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murther, or foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour;
But even for want of that for which I am richer,
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
As I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.
Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born than not to have pleas'd me better.
France. Is it but this, — a tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do? My Lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love 's not love
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.
Bur. Royal Lear,
Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.
Lear. Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm.
Bur. I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father
That you must lose a husband.
Cor. Peace be with Burgundy
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.
France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich being poor,
Most choice forsaken, and most lov'd despis'd!
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:
Be it lawful I take up what 's cast away.
Gods, gods! 't is strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflamed respect.
Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:
Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy

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[225] *murther:* so the folio: a tormenting word: it seems impossible that S. should represent Cordelia — Cordelia of all women — so tender, proud, and true, as admitting to her very self that she could be even "*suspect d'etre suspect*" of murder, and as impossible that he should full into such an anti-climax as "murder or foulness;" so that the proffered help of the Collier folio MS., "*nor other foulness*," seems a godsend, although a weak one. And yet I leave the old reading, from a troubled consciousness, born of much reading of these plays in their unedited texts, that S. might have written it.

Can buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind:
Thou losest here, a better where to find.
Lear. Thou hast her, France: let her be thine; for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again. Therefore be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison.
Come, noble Burgundy.
[*Flourish. Exeunt all but France, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia.*
France. Bid farewell to your sisters.
Cor. The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you: I know you what you are;
And like a sister am most loath to call
Your faults as they are nam'd. Use well our father:
To your professed bosoms I commit him:
But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.
Reg. Prescribe not us our duties.
Gon. Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath received you
At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.
Cor. Time shall unfold what plaited cunning hides:
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper!
France. Come, my fair Cordelia.
[*Exeunt France and Cordelia.*

Gon. Sister, it is not a little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That 's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little: he always lov'd our sister most; and with what poor judgement he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.

Reg. 'T is the infirmity of his age: yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-engraffed condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

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280 *Come, my fair Cordelia.* It is worth while to remark the simplicity of the social conditions of this drama. Cordelia, who a few minutes before was uncertain whether Burgundy or France would have her, now walks off alone with France without the slightest semblance of ceremony, although there is to be some further compliment of leave-taking between the kings.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you, let 's hit together; if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall further think on 't.

Gon. We must do something, and i' th' heat. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The* EARL OF GLOUCESTER'S *castle.*

Enter EDMUND, *with a letter.*

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well, then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate: fine word, — legitimate!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!
And the King gone to-night! subscrib'd his power!
Confined to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad! Edmund, how now! what news?

Edm. So please your lordship, none. [*Putting up the letter.*

Glou. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

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[3] *the plague*, etc. In these two lines, *plague*, *curiosity*, and *deprive* are used with the utmost license consistent with intelligibility: *plague* = toils, perplexity; *curiosity* = nicety, scrupulosity; *deprive* = rob. The seeming irregularity of line 4 has led to the suggestion that curiosity should be, and was, pronounced *curious'ty*. Not so, but, *cu-rus'ty*. Nothing is surer than that S. pronounced "curious" *cu-rus*, and "curiously" *cu-rus-ly*.

[24] *subscrib'd* = signed away.

[25] *exhibition* = allowance of money.

Glou. What paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glou. No? What needed, then, that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let 's see: come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perus'd, I find it not fit for your o'er-looking.

Glou. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glou. Let 's see, let 's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

Glo. [*Reads.*] "This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, EDGAR."

Hum — conspiracy! — "Sleep till I waked him, — you should enjoy half his revenue," — My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? — When came this to you? who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord: there 's the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glou. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glou. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

Glou. Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: but I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declining, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glou. O villain, villain! His very opinion in the letter! Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish! Go, sirrah, seek him; I 'll apprehend him: abominable villain! Where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you

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57 *closet* = bed chamber.

to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course; where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath wrote this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no further pretence of danger.

Glou. Think you so?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glou. He cannot be such a monster —

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glou. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him. Heaven and earth! Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently: convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glou. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourg'd by the sequent effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack'd between son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there 's son against father: the King falls from bias of nature; there 's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves. Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully. And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty! 'T is strange. [*Exit.*

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune, — often the surfeit of our own behaviour, — we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion, knaves, thieves and treachers by spherical predominance, drunkards, liars and adulterers by an enforc'd obedience of planetary influence, and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail; and my nativity was under *Ursa major;* so that it follows, I am rough and lecherous. Tut, I should have been that I am,

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92 *a due resolution* = a sufficient resolution, or resolving, of this doubt.

had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar —

Enter EDGAR.

and pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villanous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! *fa, sol, la, mi.*

Edg. How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself about that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come; when saw you my father last?

Edg. Why, the night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word or countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That 's my fear. I pray you, have a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: pray ye, go; there 's my key: if you do stir abroad, go arm'd.

Edg. Arm'd, brother!

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; go arm'd: I am no honest man if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I have seen and heard; but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it: pray you, away.

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[124] *fa, sol,* etc.: Edmund sings merely to seem at ease; but S. has made him sing quite in keeping with the last part of his speech. His notes (in the natural key) are F, G, A, B, — inconsequent, distracting, and implying a discord that demands resolution Moreover, his singing leads Edgar to ask him what *serious* contemplation he is in.

[130] *succeed unhappily:* success, that is, that which follows, may be bad or good; and this proper use of the word was the usage of S.'s day.

[136] *sectary astronomical* = one of the sect of astrologers.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?
Edm. I do serve you in this business. [*Exit Edgar.*
A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy. I see the business.
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me 's meet that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *The* DUKE OF ALBANY'S *palace.*

Enter GONERIL, *and* OSWALD, *her steward.*

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his Fool?
Osw. Yes, madam.
Gon. By day and night he wrongs me; every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other
That sets us all at odds. I 'll not endure it.
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle. When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him; say I am sick:
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I 'll answer.
Osw. He 's coming, madam; I hear him. [*Horns within.*
Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I 'ld have it come to question:
If he dislike it, let him to our sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again, and must be us'd
With checks as flatteries, — when they are seen abus'd.
Remember what I tell you.
Osw. Well, madam.
Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you;
What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so:
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak: I 'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my very course. Prepare for dinner. [*Exeunt.*

---

[165] *practices* = schemes, plots in action.

[20] *With checks*, etc.: a very unsatisfactory line: "as" is probably used in the sense "as well as;" but the rest of the line is so nearly meaningless that we might suspect corruption, were it not that S. always falls into rhyme and weakness together; most of all in his rhyming tags.

Scene IV. *A hall in the same.*

Enter Kent, *disguised.*

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech defuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I raz'd my likeness. Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come, thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Horns within. Enter Lear, Knights, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner; go get it ready. [*Exit an Attendant.*] How now! what art thou?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? what wouldst thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgement; to fight when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

Lear. What 's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me: if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. Dinner, ho, dinner! Where 's my knave? my Fool? Go you, and call my Fool hither. [*Exit an Attendant*

---

[2] *defuse* = disorder, and so disguise.
[15] *eat no fish* = (possibly) am no Papist; but the meaning is doubtful.

Enter OSWALD.

You, you, sirrah, where 's my daughter?

Osw. So please you,— [*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back. [*Exit a Knight.*] Where 's my Fool, ho? I think the world 's asleep.

Re-enter Knight.

How now! where 's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I call'd him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgement, your highness is not entertained with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there 's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependants as in the Duke himself also and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! say'st thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent when I think your highness wrong'd.

Lear. Thou but rememb'rest me of mine own conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into 't. But where 's my Fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady 's going into France, sir, the Fool hath much pin'd away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well. Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her. [*Exit an Attendant.*] Go you, call hither my Fool. [*Exit an Attendant.*

Re-enter OSWALD.

O, you sir, you, come you hither, sir: who am I, sir?

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. "My lady's father"! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal? [*Striking him.*

Osw. I 'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripp'd neither, you base foot-ball player. [*Tripping up his heels.*

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou serv'st me, and I 'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I 'll teach you differences:

away, away! If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away! go to; have you wisdom? so. [*Pushes Oswald out.*

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there 's earnest of thy service. [*Giving Kent money.*

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too: here 's my coxcomb. [*Offering Kent his cap.*

Lear. How now, my pretty knave! how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, Fool?

Fool. Why, for taking one's part that 's out of favour: nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou 'lt catch cold shortly: there, take my coxcomb: why, this fellow has banish'd two on 's daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will; if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb. — How now, nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I 'ld keep my coxcombs myself. There 's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth 's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipp'd out, when Lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

Fool. Sirrah, I 'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle:

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest;
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Kent. This is nothing, Fool.

Fool. Then 't is like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for 't. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. [*To Kent.*] Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a Fool.

Lear. A bitter fool!

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?

---

102 *brach* = a hunting bitch.

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

Fool. That lord that counsell'd thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,
And do thou for him stand:
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on 't: and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to myself; they 'll be snatching. Give me an egg, nuncle, and I 'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' th' middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i' th' middle, and gav'st away both parts, thou bor'st thy ass on thy back o'er the dirt: thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gav'st thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipp'd that first finds it so.

[*Singing.*] Fools had ne'er less wit in a year;
For wise men are grown foppish,
They know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou mad'st thy daughters thy mothers: for when thou gav'st them the rod, and put'st down thine own breeches,

[*Singing.*] Then they for sudden joy did weep,
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.

Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy Fool to lie: I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we 'll have you whipp'd.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are: they 'll have me whipp'd for speaking true, thou 'lt have me whipp'd for lying; and sometimes I am whipp'd for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a Fool: and yet I would not be thee, nuncle; thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' th' middle. Here comes one o' the parings.

Enter Goneril.

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet on?
Methinks you are too much of late i' th' frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure: I am better than thou art now; I am a Fool, thou art nothing. [*To Gon.*] Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue; so your face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum,

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
Weary of all, shall want some.

[*Pointing to Lear.*] That 's a sheal'd peascod.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd Fool,
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For, you trow, nuncle,

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had it head bit off by it young.

So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. Come, sir,
I would you would make use of that good wisdom,
Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away
These dispositions, that of late transform you
From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse? "Whoop, Jug! I love thee."

Lear. Doth any here know me? This is not Lear:
Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied — Ha! waking? 't is not so.
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

---

[189] *which if you should*, etc. The rest of this speech is very carelessly and confusedly written. Nevertheless its meaning is plain enough to the intelligent reader who will disentangle it. To paraphrase it would be tedious, if not superfluous.

[197] *it head*, etc.: *it* for *its*.

[206] *Jug* = a nickname for Joan.

Fool. Lear's shadow.

Lear. I would learn that; for, by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright:
As you are old and reverend, you should be wise.
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel
Than a graced palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: be then desir'd
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainder, that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your age,
And know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!
Saddle my horses; call my train together.
Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee:
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people; and your disorder'd rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents,—[*To Alb.*] O, sir, are you come?
Is it your will? Speak, sir.—Prepare my horses.—
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
Than the sea-monster!

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. [*To Gon.*] Detested kite! thou liest:
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name. O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
That, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,

[218] *admiration* = wonder.
[231] *depend* = hang on.

And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in, [*Striking his head.*
And thy dear judgement out! Go, go, my people.
Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant
Of what hath moved you.
Lear. It may be so, my lord.
Hear, Nature! hear, dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child! — Away, away! [*Exit.*
Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?
Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause;
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Re-enter LEAR.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers at a clap!
Within a fortnight!
Alb. What 's the matter, sir?
Lear. I 'll tell thee: [*To Gon.*] Life and death! I am asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee!
The untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause again, I 'll pluck ye out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay. Yea, is it come to this?
Let it be so: yet have I left a daughter,
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable:
When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She 'll flay thy wolvish visage. Thou shalt find

---

[267] *cadent* = falling.
[282] *untented* = unprobed, unsurgeoned, neglected.
[288] *comfortable* = comfort-giving.

That I 'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever: thou shalt, I warrant thee.
[*Exeunt Lear, Kent, and Attendants.*

Gon. Do you mark that, my lord?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you,—

Gon. Pray you, content. What, Oswald, ho!
[*To the Fool.*] You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry and take the Fool with thee.

A fox, when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter:
So the Fool follows after. [*Exit.*

Gon. This man hath had good counsel:—a hundred knights!
'T is politic and safe to let him keep
At point a hundred knights: yes, that, on every dream,
Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy. Oswald, I say!

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

Gon. Safer than trust too far:
Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister:
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have show'd the unfitness,—

Re-enter OSWALD.

How now, Oswald!
What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Osw. Yes, madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse:
Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own
As may compact it more. Get you gone;
And hasten your return. [*Exit Oswald.*] No, no, my lord,
This milky gentleness and course of yours
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask'd for want of wisdom
Than praised for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell:
Striving to better, oft we mar what 's well.

---

300 *A fox*, etc. These lines all rhyme. In *halter*, the *l* was probably silent; *after* was pronounced "arter."

Gon. Nay, then —

Alb. Well, well; the event. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *Court before the same.*

Enter Lear, Kent, *and* Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Glou'ster with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you know than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in 's heels, were 't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall ne'er go slipshod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she 's as like this as a crab 's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. Why, what canst thou tell, my boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one 's nose stands i' th' middle on 's face?

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side 's nose: that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong —

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put 's head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature. So kind a father! Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed: thou wouldst make a good Fool.

Lear. To take 't again perforce! Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my Fool, nuncle, I 'ld have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How 's that?

---

8 *kibes* = indurated chilblains on the heel, from which the suffering seems to have been common of old.

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

Enter Gentleman.

How now! are the horses ready?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

Fool. She that 's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *The* EARL OF GLOUCESTER'S *castle.*

Enter EDMUND, *and* CURAN *meets him.*

Edm. Save thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his duchess will be here with him this night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad; I mean the whisper'd ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments?

Edm. Not I: pray you, what are they?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Edm. The Duke be here to-night? The better! best!
This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act: briefness and fortune, work!
Brother, a word; descend: brother, I say!

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches: O sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid;
You have now the good advantage of the night:
Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
He 's coming hither; now, i' th' night, i' th' haste,
And Regan with him: have you nothing said

---

[46] *She that 's a maid*, etc. This speech is probably a tag, written by or for the actor of the Fool.

[17] *queasy* = easily disturbed.

Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.
Edg. I am sure on 't, not a word.
Edm. I hear my father coming: pardon me;
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you:
Draw; seem to defend yourself; now quit you well.
Yield: come before my father. Light, ho, here!
Fly, brother. Torches, torches! So, farewell. [*Exit Edgar.*
Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion [*Wounds his arm.*
Of my more fierce endeavour: I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport. Father, father!
Stop, stop! No help?

Enter Gloucester, *and* Servants *with torches.*

Glou. Now, Edmund, where 's the villain?
Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress,—
Glou. But where is he?
Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.
Glou. Where is the villain, Edmund?
Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could—
Glou. Pursue him, ho! Go after. [*Exeunt some Servants.*]
By no means what?
Edm. Persuade me to the murther of your lordship;
But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all the thunders bend;
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father; sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to the encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.
Glou. Let him fly far:
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
And found—dispatch. The noble duke my master,
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:
By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,

---

52 *lanc'd:* the quartos have *lancht*, which some editors "prefer," as if it were another word, launched! It is a mere phonetic spelling, "lance" having been pronounced *lanch*.
55 *gasted* = frightened.
60 *arch* = chief.

Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;
He that conceals him, death.
Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threaten'd to discover him: he replied,
"Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should deny,—
As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce
My very character,—I 'ld turn it all
To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice:
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spurs
To make thee seek it."
Glou. Strong and fasten'd villain!
Would he deny his letter? I never got him. [*Tucket within.*
Hark, the Duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes.
All ports I 'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;
The Duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have due note of him; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I 'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend! since I came hither,
Which I can call but now, I have heard strange news.
Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my lord?
Glou. O, madam, my old heart is crack'd, is crack'd!
Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?
Glou. O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid!
Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?
Glou. I know not, madam: 't is too bad, too bad.
Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.
Reg. No marvel, then, though he were ill affected:
'T is they have put him on the old man's death,
To have the expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister

---

[65] *pight* = pitched, set, determined.
[67] *unpossessing* = landless.
[72] *character* = handwriting.
[81] *his picture:* not necessarily what we call a portrait, but probably a minute description of his person.
[85] *capable* = capable of inheritance, although illegitimate.

Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I 'll not be there.
Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.
Edm. 'T was my duty, sir.
Glou. He did bewray his practice; and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.
Corn. Is he pursued?
Glou. Ay, my good lord.
Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please. For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.
Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.
Glou. For him I thank your grace.
Corn. You know not why we came to visit you,—
Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-eyed night:
Occasions, noble Glou'ster, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice:
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I least thought it fit
To answer from our home; the several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.
Glou. I serve you, madam:
Your graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt*

Scene II. *Before* Gloucester's *castle.*

Enter Kent *and* Oswald, *severally.*

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend: art of this house?
Kent. Ay.
Osw. Where may we set our horses?
Kent. I' th' mire.
Osw. Prithee, if thou lov'st me, tell me.
Kent. I love thee not.
Osw. Why, then, I care not for thee.

---

107 *bewray his practice* = reveal his plot.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.

Osw. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Osw. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-liver'd, action-taking knave, a whoreson, glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that wouldst be a bawd, in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deni'st the least syllable of thy addition.

Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee nor knows thee!

Kent. What a brazen-fac'd varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days ago since I tripp'd up thy heels, and beat thee before the King? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I 'll make a sop o' th' moonshine of you: draw, you whoreson cullionly barber-monger, draw. [*Drawing his sword.*

Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the King; and take Vanity the puppet's part against the royalty of her father: draw, you rogue, or I 'll so carbonado your shanks: draw, you rascal; come your ways.

Osw. Help, ho! murther! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave, strike. [*Beating him.*

Osw. Help, ho! murther! murther!

Enter EDMUND, *with his rapier drawn,* CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOUCESTER, *and* Servants.

Edm. How now! What 's the matter?

Kent. With you, goodman boy, an you please: come, I 'll flesh ye; come on, young master.

Glou. Weapons! arms! What 's the matter here?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives;
He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

---

[8] *Lipsbury pinfold.* Where this pinfold was has not been discovered.

[14] *three-suited* = (probably) one who is allowed three suits a year; *hundred-pound* = poor, small; as in the slang phrase "one-horse."

[15] *action-taking* = one who will "take the law" rather than fight.

[16] *one-trunk-inheriting* = a trunk inheriting = who takes cast clothes.

[21] *addition* = title.

[28] *cullionly* = doltish, clownish. [35] *barber-monger* = one who consorts with barbers: "monger" as in whoremonger. Kent's store of billingsgate is rich and varied. He calls us into something like sympathy with Oswald.

[33] *carbonado* = slice as for broiling.

[36] *neat slave* = cattle-tending slave.

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the King.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Osw. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee: a tailor made thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-cutter or a painter could not have made him so ill, though he had been but two hours o' th' trade.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spar'd at suit of his gray beard, —

Kent. Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter! My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the walls of a jakes with him. Spare my gray beard, you wagtail?

Corn. Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain
Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Reneag, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.
A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I 'ld drive ye cackling home to Camelot.

Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?

Glou. How fell you out? say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What 's his offence?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.

---

57 *thou unnecessary letter.* Kent also comes among the phonetic spelling reformers; he would purge the alphabet.

68 *intrinse* = close, and hence tightly drawn: probably S.'s abbreviation of intrinsecate (a new word in his time), from the Ital. *intrinsicato* = intimate, involved.

71 *Reneag* = renounce. *halcyon beaks:* the halcyon, or king-fisher, was supposed to indicate changes in the weather by its action.

77 *Camelot:* There are said to be moors at Camelot, in Somersetshire, very productive of geese.

Kent. Sir, 't is my occupation to be plain:
I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.
Corn. This is some fellow,
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he,
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth!
An they will take it, so; if not, he 's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly ducking observants
That stretch their duties nicely.
Kent. Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity,
Under the allowance of your great aspect,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flick'ring Phœbus' front, —
Corn. What mean'st by this?
Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguil'd you in a plain accent was a plain knave; which for my part I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to 't.
Corn. What was th' offence you gave him?
Osw. I never gave him any:
It pleas'd the King his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That 't worthied him, got praises of the King
For him attempting who was self-subdued;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.
Kent. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.
Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We 'll teach you —
Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn:
Call not your stocks for me: I serve the King;

---

[90] *the garb* = the dress, and so the common appearance of things.
[113] *That 't* = that it.
[115] *fleshment* = fleshing, as in "fleshes his sword."
[117] *Ajax is their fool:* that is, they play Thersites to him. Thersites constantly reviled Ajax for a thick-headed, bragging coward. See *Troilus and Cressida.* Evidence here that *Troilus and Cressida* was all written before *King Lear.*

On whose employment I was sent to you:
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.
Corn. Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and honour,
There shall he sit till noon.
Reg. Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night too.
Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.
Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.
Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks!
[*Stocks brought out.*
Glou. Let me beseech your grace not to do so:
His fault is much, and the good King his master
Will check him for 't: your purpos'd low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with: the King must take it ill,
That he 's so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.
Corn. I 'll answer that.
Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
For following her affairs. Put in his legs. [*Kent is put in the stocks.*
Come, my good lord, away. [*Exeunt all but Gloucester and Kent.*
Glou. I am sorry for thee, friend; 't is the Duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd: I 'll entreat for thee.
Kent. Pray, do not, sir: I have watch'd and travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I 'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!
Glou. The Duke 's to blame in this; 't will be ill taken. [*Exit.*
Kent. Good King, that must approve the common saw,
Thou out of heaven's benediction comest
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter! Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery: I know 't is from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course;

---

152 *the common saw.* This proverbial saying, common in that day, is mentioned several times by S.

—and shall find time—
From this enormous state—seeking to give
Losses their remedies—
All weary and o'erwatch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night: smile once more; turn thy wheel! [*Sleeps.*

SCENE III. *A wood.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,
I will preserve myself, and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast. My face I'll grime with filth,
Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots,
And with presented nakedness out-face
The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!
That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Before* GLOUCESTER'S *castle. Kent in the stocks.*

Enter LEAR, Fool, *and* Gentleman.

Lear. 'T is strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.
Gent. As I learn'd,

---

[160] *and shall find time*, etc. Kent, weary and worn, tries to read Cordelia's letter, and falls asleep as he is reading it.

[10] *elf*, etc. = tumble it in elf locks.

[14] *Bedlam beggars.* These were a sort of allowed vagabond beggars, who had been, or who might have well been, in Bedlam, or who assumed the manners and habits of Bedlamites, to excite sympathy.

[19] *bans* = curses.

[20] *Turlygod.* Nothing is known about this name.

[21] *nothing am:* a perfect rhyme with Tom, both being pronounced with broad *a*, *Tahm*, *ahm*.

The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.
Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No, my lord.

Fool. Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the heads, dogs and bears by th' neck, monkeys by th' loins, and men by th' legs: when a man 's over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks.

Lear. What 's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?
Kent. It is both he and she;
Your son and daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I say.
Kent. I say, yea.
Lear. No, no, they would not.
Kent. Yes, they have.
Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.
Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.
Lear. They durst not do 't;
They could not, would not do 't; 't is worse than murther,
To do upon respect such violent outrage:
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.
Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your Highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read: on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine, —
Being the very fellow that of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness, —
Having more man than wit about me, drew:

---

10 *nether-stocks* = what we now call stockings.
32 *intermission* = intrusion; that is, notwithstanding he intruded his letter upon that which I had brought.
34 *meiny:* household; whence "menial."

He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.

Fool. Winter 's not gone yet, if the wild-geese fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind;
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to th' poor.

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!
Hysterica passio, down, thou climbing sorrow,
Thy element 's below! — Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not;
Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence but what you speak of?

Kent. None.
How chance the King comes with so small a train?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' th' stocks for that question, thou 'dst well deserv'd it.

Kent. Why, Fool?

Fool. We 'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there 's no labouring i' th' winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men; and there 's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that 's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it: but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain,
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the Fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away;
The Fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learn'd you this, Fool?

Fool. Not i' th' stocks, fool.

Re-enter LEAR, *with* GLOUCESTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?

---

52 *dolours:* with a manifest quibble on "dollars"

They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches;
The images of revolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer.
Glou. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the Duke;
How unremovable and fix'd he is
In his own course.
Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!
Fiery? what quality? Why, Glou'ster, Glou'ster,
I 'ld speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.
Glou. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.
Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me, man?
Glou. Ay, my good lord.
Lear. The King would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:
Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!
Fiery? the fiery duke? Tell the hot duke that —
No, but not yet: may be he is not well:
Infirmity doth still neglect all office
Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body: I 'll forbear;
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,
To take the indispos'd and sickly fit
For the sound man. — Death on my state! wherefore
[*Looking on Kent.*
Should he sit here? This act persuades me
That this remotion of the Duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
Go tell the Duke and 's wife I 'ld speak with them,
Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber-door I 'll beat the drum
Till it cry sleep to death.
Glou. I would have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*
Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart! but, down!

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels when she put 'em i' th' paste alive; she rapp'd 'em o' th' coxcombs with a stick, and cried "Down, wantons, down!" 'T was her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, butter'd his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOUCESTER, *and* Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.
Corn. Hail to your grace!
[*Kent is set at liberty.*

---

111 *practice* = a mere fetch, as he says before.

118 *cockney.* This word seems to have meant, of old, an under-cook; but its origin and its real meaning are very uncertain.

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.
Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adultress. [*To Kent.*] O, are you free?
Some other time for that. Beloved Regan,
Thy sister 's naught: O Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here: [*Points to his heart.*
I can scarce speak to thee; thou 'lt not believe
With how deprav'd a quality — O Regan!
Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience: I have hope
You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.
Lear. Say, how is that?
Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'T is on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.
Lear. My curses on her!
Reg. O, sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be rul'd and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return;
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.
Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
"Dear daughter, I confess that I am old; [*Kneeling.*
Age is unnecessary: on my knees I beg
That you 'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food."
Reg. Good sir, no more; these are unsightly tricks:
Return you to my sister.
Lear. [*Rising.*] Never, Regan:
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart:
All the stor'd vengeances of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!
Corn. Fie, sir, fie!

---

[134] *You less know how:* a sort of sentence which it seems that S. alone could write. The sense is plain, but the construction is logically inexplicable.
[144] *some discretion* = some discreet person.
[148] *the house:* the head of our house, our royal family.
[159] *taking airs* = infecting airs: we say that inoculation "takes."

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!
Reg. O the blest gods! so will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.
Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse:
Thy tender-hested nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness: her eyes are fierce; but thine
Do comfort and not burn. 'T is not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And in conclusion to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in: thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
Thy half o' th' kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.
Reg. Good sir, to th' purpose.
Lear. Who put my man i' th' stocks? [*Tucket within.*
Corn. What trumpet 's that?
Reg. I know 't, my sister's: this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.

Enter OSWALD.

Is your lady come?
Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.
Out, varlet, from my sight!
Corn. What means your grace
Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have good hope
Thou didst not know on 't. Who comes here? O heavens,

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!
[*To Gon.*] Art not asham'd to look upon this beard?
O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?
Gon. Why not by the hand, sir? How have I offended?
All 's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.
Lear. O sides, you are too tough;
Will you yet hold? How came my man i' th' stocks?

---

167 *tender-hested nature* = tenderly ordered, tenderly governed nature: the quarto reading; which has hitherto been set aside for that of the folio, tender-*hefted*, from which no satisfying sense has been extracted. Rowe read "tender *hearted*."

171 *sizes* = allowances. A beneficiary student is still called a "sizar."

187 *Allow* = receive with approval.

Corn. I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.
Lear. You! did you?
Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me:
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.
Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd!
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' th' air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,—
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot. Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. [*Pointing at Oswald.*
Gon. At your choice, sir.
Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad:
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell:
We 'll no more meet, no more see one another:
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or rather a disease that 's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I 'll not chide thee;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove:
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure:
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.
Reg. Not altogether so:
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.
Lear. Is this well spoken?
Reg. I dare avouch it, sir: what, fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger

196 *less advancement* = worse treatment.

Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'T is hard; almost impossible.
Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants or from mine?
Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd to slack ye,
We could control them. If you will come to me, —
For now I spy a danger, — I entreat you
To bring but five and twenty: to no more
Will I give place or notice.
Lear. I gave you all:
Reg. And in good time you gave it.
Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries;
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number. What, must I come to you
With five and twenty, Regan? said you so?
Reg. And speak 't again, my lord; no more with me.
Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,
When others are more wicked: not being the worst
Stands in some rank of praise. [*To Gon.*] I 'll go with thee:
Thy fifty yet doth double five and twenty,
And thou art twice her love.
Gon. Hear me, my lord:
What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?
Reg. What need one?
Lear. O, reason not the need: our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life 's as cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need, —
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,
And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall — I will do such things, —
What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I 'll weep;

No, I 'll not weep .
I have full cause of weeping ; but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
Or ere I 'll weep. O, fool ! I shall go mad !

[*Exeunt Lear, Gloucester, Kent, and Fool. Storm and tempest.*

Corn. Let us withdraw ; 't will be a storm.
Reg. This house is little : the old man and 's people
Cannot be well bestow'd.
Gon. 'T is his own blame ; ' hath put himself from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.
Reg. For his particular, I 'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.
Gon. So am I purpos'd.
Where is my Lord of Glou'ster ?
Corn. Follow'd the old man forth : he is return'd.

Re-enter Gloucester.

Glou. The King is in high rage.
Corn. Whither is he going ?
Glou. He calls to horse ; but will I know not whither.
Corn. 'T is best to give him way ; he leads himself.
Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.
Glou. Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak winds
Do sorely ruffle ; for many miles about
There 's scarce a bush.
Reg. O, sir, to wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors :
He is attended with a desperate train ;
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.
Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord ; 't is a wild night :
My Regan counsels well : come out o' th' storm. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I. *A heath.*

Storm still. Enter Kent *and a* Gentleman, *meeting.*

Kent. Who 's there, besides foul weather ?
Gent. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.
Kent. I know you. Where 's the King ?
Gent. Contending with the fretful element ;

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282 *O, fool!* Not the coxcombed, but the crowned.
286 *' hath* = he hath.
288 *his particular* = himself.

Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,
That things might change or cease; tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all.
Kent. But who is with him?
Gent. None but the Fool; who labours to outjest
His heart-struck injuries.
Kent. Sir, I do know you;
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
Who have — as who have not, that their great stars
Thron'd and set high? — servants, who seem no less,
Which are to France the spies and speculations
Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen,
Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind King; or something deeper,
Whereof perchance these are but furnishings;
But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner. Now to you:
If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The King hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;
And, from some knowledge and assurance, offer
This office to you.
Gent. I will talk further with you.
Kent. No, do not.
For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out-wall, open this purse, and take

[12] *cub-drawn* = a bear whose udders are drawn dry by her cubs.
[23] *who seem no less* = are in appearance as great as their masters.

What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia, —
As fear not but you shall, — show her this ring;
And she will tell you who your fellow is
That yet you do not know. Fie on this storm!
I will go seek the King.
Gent. Give me your hand: have you no more to say?
Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;
That, when we have found the King, — in which your pain
That way, I 'll this, — he that first lights on him
Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II. *Another part of the heath. Storm still.*

Enter Lear *and* Fool.

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' th' world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is better than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing: here 's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man:
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. Oh! Oh! 't is foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put 's head in has a good head-piece.

The cod-piece that will house
Before the head has any,

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[8] *germens* = seeds, germs.
[10] *court holy-water* = fair words, flattering speeches.
[18] *subscription* = submission.
[27] *cod-piece* = a part of the male dress made almost necessary by the tight-knitted nether-stocks. See *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act II. Sc. 7.

The head and he shall louse;
  So beggars marry many.
The man that makes his toe
  What he his heart should make
Shall of a corn cry woe,
  And turn his sleep to wake.

For there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience; I will say nothing.

Enter Kent.

Kent. Who 's there?

Fool. Marry, here 's grace and a cod-piece; that 's a wise man and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves: since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
The affliction nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;
Thou perjur'd, and thou simular man of virtue
That art incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practis'd on man's life: close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed!
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:
Repose you there; while I to this hard house —
More harder than the stones whereof 't is rais'd;
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Deni'd me to come in — return, and force
Their scanted courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.
Come on, my boy: how dost, my boy? art cold?

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31 *that makes his toe*, etc. = that keeps his toe as close as he should his heart.
44 *gallow* = frighten: still provincial in England.
50 *pother:* the folio, "pudder," a mere phonetic irregularity of spelling.

I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That sorrows yet for thee.

Fool. [*Singing.*]

He that has and a little tiny wit, —
  With hey, ho, the wind and the rain, —
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
  For the rain it raineth every day.

Lear. True, my good boy. Come, bring us to this hovel.
[*Exeunt Lear and Kent.*

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtezan.
I 'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
When priests are more in word than matter;
When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors:
When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;
When slanders do not live in tongues;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
When usurers tell their gold i' th' field;
And bawds and whores do churches build;
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion:
Then comes the time, who lives to see 't,
That going shall be used with feet.
This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time.
[*Exit.*

SCENE III. GLOUCESTER'S *castle.*

Enter GLOUCESTER *and* EDMUND.

Glou. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charg'd me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural!

Glou. Go to; say you nothing. There 's a division betwixt the dukes; and a worse matter than that: I have receiv'd a letter this night; 't is dangerous to be spoken; I have lock'd the letter in my closet: these injuries the King now bears will be

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[72] *poor fool:* affectionately and pitifully; not as calling him Jester.

[80] *I 'll speak a prophecy*, etc This and the rest of this speech is an interpolation, we may be sure, by or for the actor of the Fool.

revenged home; there 's part of a power already footed: we must incline to the King. I will seek him, and privily relieve him: go you and maintain talk with the Duke, that my charity be not of him perceived: if he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. Though I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the King my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful. [*Exit.*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the Duke
Instantly know; and of that letter too:
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses; no less than all:
The younger rises when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

Scene IV. *The heath. Before a hovel.*

Enter Lear, Kent, *and* Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:
The tyranny of the open night 's too rough
For nature to endure. [*Storm still.*
Lear. Let me alone.
Kent. Good my lord, enter here.
Lear. Wilt break my heart?
Kent. I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.
Lear. Thou think'st 't is much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin: so 't is to thee;
But where the greater malady is fixed,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou 'ldst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,
Thou 'ldst meet the bear i' th' mouth. When the mind 's free,
The body 's delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to 't? But I will punish home:
No, I will weep no more. In such a night
To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure.
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all, —
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.
Kent. Good my lord, enter here.
Lear. Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I 'll go in.
[*To the Fool.*] In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty, —
Nay, get thee in. I 'll pray, and then I 'll sleep. [*Fool goes in.*

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [*Within.*] Fadom and half, fadom and half! Poor Tom! [*The Fool runs out from the hovel.*

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here 's a spirit. Help me, help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand. Who 's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit: he says his name 's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' th' straw? Come forth.

Enter Edgar, *disguised as a madman.*

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me!

Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.
Hum! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

Lear. Hast thou given all to thy two daughters?
And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives anything to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, and through ford and whirlipool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inch'd bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless thy five wits! Tom 's a-cold, — O, do de, do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: there could I have him now, — and there, — and there again, and there. [*Storm still.*

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?
Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

Fool. Nay, he reserv'd a blanket, else we had been all sham'd.

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?

Judicious punishment! 'T was this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill:
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' th' foul fiend: obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom 's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curl'd my hair; wore gloves in my cap; serv'd the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one that slept in the contriving of lust, and wak'd to do it: wine lov'd I deeply, dice dearly; and in woman out-paramour'd the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman: keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.
Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind:
Says suum, mun, ha, no, nonny.
Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by. [*Storm still.*

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here 's three on 's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! come, unbutton here. [*Tearing off his clothes.*

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 't is a naughty night to swim in. Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart; a small spark, all the rest on 's body cold. Look, here comes a walking fire.

Enter GLOUCESTER, *with a torch.*

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

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[71] *Judicious punishment* = just, even-handed, retributive punishment.

[73] *Pillicock:* an old fantastic name used in nursery rhymes: —

"Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill,
If he 's not gone he sits there still."

[90] *plackets.* This word here seems to mean petticoats. See *Love's Labour 's Lost,* Act III. Sc. 1, line 186.

[108] *web and the pin* = cataract.

S. Withold footed thrice the old;
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your grace?
Lear. What 's he?
Kent. Who 's there? What is 't you seek?
Glou. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipp'd from tithing to tithing, and stock'd, punish'd, and imprison'd; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But mice and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.
Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin; peace, thou fiend!
Glou. What, hath your grace no better company?
Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman:
Modo he 's call'd, and Mahu.
Glou. Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord,
That it doth hate what gets it.
Edg. Poor Tom 's a-cold.
Glou. Go in with me: my duty cannot suffer
To obey in all your daughters' hard commands:
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.
Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher.
What is the cause of thunder?
Kent. Good my lord, take his offer; go into the house.
Lear. I 'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.
What is your study?
Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.
Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.
Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord;
His wits begin to unsettle.
Glou. Canst thou blame him? [*Storm still.*
His daughters seek his death: ah, that good Kent!

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111 *the old* = the wold.
112 *nine-fold* = nine foal = nine foals: *d* and *t* were and are added to such words by rude rustic folks.
115 *aroint* = avaunt, begone. See *Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 3.
130 *Smulkin.* The names of these spirits and much of this business S. found in a book about witchcraft, possession, etc., by Harsnet, published in 1603.

He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man!
Thou say'st the King grows mad; I 'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself: I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
But lately, very late: I lov'd him, friend;
No father his son dearer: truth to tell thee,
The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night 's this!
I do beseech your grace, —
Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir.
Noble philosopher, your company.
Edg. Tom 's a-cold.
Glou. In, fellow, there, into the hovel: keep thee warm.
Lear. Come, let 's in all.
Kent. This way, my lord.
Lear. With him;
I will keep still with my philosopher.
Kent. Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.
Glou. Take him you on.
Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us.
Lear. Come, good Athenian.
Glou. No words, no words: hush.

Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still, — Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. GLOUCESTER'S *castle.*

Enter CORNWALL *and* EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the Duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee Earl of Gloucester. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

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171 *Child Rowland*, etc. This seems to be a fragment of an old ballad which was recovered in a mutilated form and published by Jamieson in his *Northern Antiquities.* See Child's *Ballads*, vol. i. p. 245.

Edm. [*Aside.*] If I find him comforting the King, it will stuff his suspicion more fully. — I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. *A chamber in a farmhouse adjoining the castle.*

Enter Gloucester, Lear, Kent, Fool, *and* Edgar.

Glou. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience: the gods reward your kindness! [*Exit Gloucester.*

Edg. Frateretto calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman?

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No, he 's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he 's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon 'em, —

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He 's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.
[*To Edgar.*] Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer;
[*To the Fool.*] Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she foxes!

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares!
Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?

Fool. Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me, —
  Her boat hath a leak,
  And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amazed:
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I 'll see their trial first. Bring in the evidence.
[*To Edgar.*] Thou robed man of justice, take thy place;

[*To the Fool.*] And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity,
Bench by his side: [*To Kent*] you are o' th' commission,
Sit you too.

Edg. Let us deal justly.

Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Pur! the cat is gray.

Lear. Arraign her first; 't is Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kick'd the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

Lear. And here 's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on. Stop her there!
Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity! Sir, where is the patience now,
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [*Aside.*] My tears begin to take his part so much,
They 'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them. Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,
Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail,
Tom will make them weep and wail:
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs and market-towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts? [*To Edg.*] You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say they are Persian attire; but let them be chang'd.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here and rest awhile.

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65 *lym*=a sort of hound.

70 *Sessa.* The meaning of this word is unknown. Perhaps it has none. It may be the Italian *Cessa*=cease.

71 *thy horn:* the Bedlam beggar carried a horn drinking-cup, which the benevolent sometimes filled with beer.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains: so, so, so. We 'll go to supper i' th' morning. So, so, so.

Fool. And I 'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Come hither, friend: where is the King my master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glou. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms;
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him:
There is a litter ready; lay him in 't,
And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master:
If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assured loss: take up, take up;
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. Oppressed nature sleeps:
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken senses,
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure. [*To the Fool.*] Come, help to bear thy master;
Thou must not stay behind.

Glou. Come, come, away.

[*Exeunt all but Edgar.*

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers suffers most i' th' mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind:
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the King bow,
He childed as I father'd! Tom, away!
Mark the high noises; and thyself bewray,
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,
In thy just proof, repeals and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the King! [*Exit.*
Lurk, lurk.

SCENE VII. GLOUCESTER'S *castle.*

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* Servants.

Corn. [*To Gon.*] Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter: the army of France is landed. — Seek out the villain Gloucester. [*Exeunt some of the Servants.*

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80 *And I'll go to bed at noon:* that is do another foolish thing; a proverbial phrase adopted by S. as the Fool's antiphonal response to the King's "supper in the morning."

Reg. Hang him instantly.
Gon. Pluck out his eyes.
Corn. Leave him to my displeasure. — Edmund, keep you our sister company: the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the Duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister: farewell, my lord of Glou'ster.

Enter Oswald.

How now! where 's the King?
Osw. My Lord of Glou'ster hath convey'd him hence:
Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
Hot questrists after him, met him at 'gate,
Who, with some other of the lords dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover; where they boast
To have well-armed friends.
Corn. Get horses for your mistress.
Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.
Corn. Edmund, farewell. [*Exeunt Goneril, Edmund, and Oswald.*
Go seek the traitor Glou'ster,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us. [*Exeunt other Servants.*
Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control. Who 's there? the traitor?

Enter Gloucester, *brought in by two or three.*

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 't is he.
Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.
Glou. What mean your graces? Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.
Corn. Bind him, I say. [*Servants bind him.*
Reg. Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!
Glou. Unmerciful lady as you are, I 'm none.
Corn. To this chair bind him. Villain, thou shalt find —
[*Regan plucks his beard.*
Glou. By the kind gods, 't is most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.
Reg. So white, and such a traitor!
Glou. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee: I am your host:

---

[9] *festinate* = speedy.
[16] *at 'gate* = at the gate.
[17] *lords dependants* = the knights attached to Lear.
[28] *corky:* defined by some critics as dry, withered; but both word and definition seem to me doubtful.

With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?
Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?
Reg. Be simple answerer, for we know the truth.
Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?
Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?
Speak.
Glou. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that 's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.
Corn. Cunning.
Reg. And false.
Corn. Where hast thou sent the King?
Glou. To Dover.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at peril —
Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.
Glou. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover, sir?
Glou. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled fires:
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
Thou shouldst have said "Good porter, turn the key."
All cruels else subscribe but I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.
Corn. See 't shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the chair.
Upon these eyes of thine I 'll set my foot.
Glou. He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help! — O cruel! O you gods!
Reg. One side will mock another; the other too.
Corn. If you see vengeance, —
First Serv. Hold your hand, my lord:
I have serv'd you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.

---

[59] *buoy'd up* = risen, lifted up itself. *Buoy* was a new verb in S.'s day; not improbably he was the first to use it: hence in the first quarto it appears as *bod*, in the second as *laid*.

[64] *All cruels else*, etc. = All other cruelties attest that I shall see swift vengeance overtake such children.

[67] *Upon these eyes of thine.* In this frightful scene S. not only followed the story upon which he built this part of his tragedy, but illustrated the manners of the period of the action, and of times much later, when even more cruel mutilations of captive enemies were common.

Reg. How now, you dog!
First Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I 'ld shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?
Corn. My villain! [*They draw and fight.*
First Serv. Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.
Reg. Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus!
[*Takes a sword, and runs at him behind.*
First Serv. Oh, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him. Oh! [*Dies.*
Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?
Glou. All dark and comfortless. Where 's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit this horrid act.
Reg. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.
Glou. O my follies! then Edgar was abus'd.
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!
Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover. [*Exit one with Gloucester.*] How is 't, my lord? how look you?
Corn. I have received a hurt: follow me, lady.
Turn out that eyeless villain; throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: give me your arm.
[*Exit Cornwall, led by Regan.*
Sec. Serv. I 'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.
Third Serv. If she live long,
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.
Sec. Serv. Let 's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would: his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.
Third Serv. Go thou: I 'll fetch some flax and whites of eggs
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him!
[*Exeunt severally.*

---

[86] *To quit* = to revenge, to make even; as in cards.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts. But who comes here?

Enter GLOUCESTER, *led by an* Old Man.

My father, poorly led? World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O, my good lord, I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glou. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.

Glou. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw: full oft 't is seen,
Our means secure us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. O dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath!
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I 'ld say I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now! Who 's there?

Edg. [*Aside.*] O gods! Who is 't can say "I am at the worst"?
I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'T is poor mad Tom.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And worse I may be yet: the worst is not
So long as we can say "This is the worst."

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Glou. Is it a beggar-man?

Old Man. Madman and beggar too.

---

[4] *esperance* = hope (Fr.), not uncommonly used in S.'s day.

[21] *secure us* = make us over-confident, so that we stumble although we see: the radical meaning of the word, without care.

[22] *commodities* = benefits: goods are still called commodities.

Glou. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' th' last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man a worm: my son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more since.
As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,
They kill us for their sport.
Edg. [*Aside.*] How should this be?
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Angering itself and others. — Bless thee, master!
Glou. Is that the naked fellow?
Old Man. Ay, my lord.
Glou. Then, prithee, get thee gone: if, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' th' way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Who I 'll entreat to lead me.
Old Man. Alack, sir, he is mad.
Glou. 'T is the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.
Old Man. I 'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on 't what will. [*Exit.*
Glou. Sirrah, naked fellow, —
Edg. Poor Tom 's a-cold. [*Aside.*] I cannot daub it further.
Glou. Come hither, fellow.
Edg. [*Aside.*] And yet I must. — Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.
Glou. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scar'd out of his good wits: bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididence, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who since possesses chambermaids and waiting-women. So, bless thee, master!

Glou. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier: heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;

---

[53] *I cannot daub it further* = I can no longer keep up this coarse concealment and pretence of madness.
[60] *Obidicut*, etc. These names are from Harsnet's book, before mentioned.
[62] *mopping and mowing:* ducking and making grimaces.
[68] *slaves* = degrades, treats as a slave.

So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost thou know Dover?
Edg. Ay, master.
Glou. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I 'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.
Edg. Give me thy arm:
Poor Tom shall lead thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Before the* DUKE OF ALBANY'S *palace.*

Enter GONERIL *and* EDMUND.

Gon. Welcome, my lord: I marvel our mild husband
Not met us on the way.

Enter OSWALD.

Now, where 's your master?
Osw. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd.
I told him of the army that was landed;
He smil'd at it: I told him you were coming;
His answer was "The worse:" of Glou'ster's treachery,
And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,
And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out:
What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;
What like, offensive.
Gon. [*To Edm.*] Then shall you go no further.
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake: he 'll not feel wrongs
Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
Hasten his musters and conduct his powers:
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;
[*Giving a favour.*
Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air:
Conceive, and fare thee well.
Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.
Gon. My most dear Glou'ster!
[*Exit Edmund.*

---

12 *cowish* = apt to be cowed.

O, the difference of man and man!
To thee a woman's services are due:
My Fool usurps my body.
Osw. Madam, here comes my lord. [*Exit.*

Enter the Duke of Albany.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.
Alb. O Goneril!
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face. I fear your disposition:
That nature, which contemns its origin,
Cannot be border'd certain in itself;
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither
And come to deadly use.
Gon. No more; the text is foolish.
Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile:
Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence e'en the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited!
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
It will come,
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.
Gon. Milk-liver'd man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs,
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering, that not know'st
Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief, where 's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land;
With plumed helm thy slayer begins threats;
Whiles thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and criest
"Alack, why does he so?"
Alb. See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.
Gon. O vain fool!

[29] *worth the whistle* = worth getting; a proverbial expression.

[35] *material* = essential; as in "material fool." *As You Like It*, Act III. Sc. 3.

[60] *Proper deformity* = thorough, complete deformity; a proper (handsome) man is a complete man: there is allusion also to the deforming of the nature proper (that is, rightly pertaining) to the person meant.

Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature. Were 't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones: howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.
Gon. Marry, your manhood now —

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?
Mess. O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall 's dead;
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Glou'ster.
Alb. Glou'ster's eyes!
Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enrag'd,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.
Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! But, O poor Glou'ster!
Lost he his other eye?
Mess. Both, both, my lord.
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'T is from your sister.
Gon. [*Aside.*] One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Glou'ster with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life: another way,
The news is not so tart. — I 'll read, and answer. [*Exit.*
Alb. Where was his son when they did take his eyes?
Mess. Come with my lady hither.
Alb. He is not here.
Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.
Alb. Knows he the wickedness?
Mess. Ay, my good lord; 't was he inform'd against him;
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.
Alb. Glou'ster, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the King,
And to revenge thine eyes. Come hither, friend:
Tell me what more thou know'st. [*Exeunt.*

---

62 *self-cover'd* = disguised by your own actions. Albany charitably assumes that his wife was not wicked by nature.
63 *feature* = making, complexion, constitution.
91 *back again:* loosely used for returning.

Scene III. *The French camp near Dover.*

Enter Kent *and a* Gentleman.

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back know you the reason?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of; which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger that his personal return was most required and necessary.

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

Gent. The Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the Queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it mov'd her.

Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears
Were like a better May: those happy smilets,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. In brief,
Sorrow would be a rarity most belov'd,
If all could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gent. 'Faith, once or twice she heav'd the name of "father"
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried "Sisters! sisters! Shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What, i' th' storm? i' th' night?
Let pity not be believed!" There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes;
And clamour-moisten'd then away she started
To deal with grief alone.

Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions;
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?

Gent. No.

---

[19] *a better May.* Here "better" may express by comparison a high quality. But possibly we should read "a *wetter* May" = a May with much rain.

[31] *clamour-moisten'd* = her face wet with her outburst of grief.

Kent. Was this before the King return'd?
Gent. No, since.
Kent. Well, sir, the poor distressed Lear 's i' th' town;
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.
Gent. Why, good sir?
Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him: his own unkindness,
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters, — these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.
Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!
Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?
Gent. 'T is so, they are afoot.
Kent. Well, sir, I 'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him: some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
Along with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. A tent.*

Enter, with drum and colours, CORDELIA, Doctor, *and* Soldiers.

Cor. Alack, 't is he: why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea; singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With bur-docks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn. A century send forth;
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*] What can man's wisdom
In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him take all my outward worth.
Doct. There is means, madam:
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

---

[51] *some dear cause* = some cause of great importance to me.
[3] *fumiter* = a common, coarse weed with a red blossom. *furrow weeds* = weeds that grow in the roads.
[4] *cuckoo-flowers* = ragged Robin.
[6] *A century* = a hundred men.

Cor. All blest secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress! Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam;
The British powers are marching hitherward.
Cor. 'T is known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them. O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about;
Therefore great France
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our aged father's right:
Soon may I hear and see him! [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. Gloucester's *castle.*

Enter Regan *and* Oswald.

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth?
Osw. Ay, madam.
Reg. Himself in person there?
Osw. Madam, with much ado:
Your sister is the better soldier.
Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?
Osw. No, madam.
Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him?
Osw. I know not, lady.
Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Glou'ster's eyes being out,
To let him live: where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us: Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to dispatch
His nighted life; moreover, to descry
The strength o' th' enemy.
Osw. I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.
Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow: stay with us;
The ways are dangerous.
Osw. I may not, madam:
My lady charg'd my duty in this business.
Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,

---

[17] *remediate* = remedying; a word, it would seem, of S.'s making.
[26] *important:* loosely used for importunate.

Something — I know not what: I 'll love thee much,
Let me unseal the letter.
Osw. Madam, I had rather —
Reg. I know your lady does not love her husband;
I am sure of that: and at her late being here
She gave strange œillades and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.
Osw. I, madam?
Reg. I speak in understanding; y' are, I know 't:
Therefore I do advise you, take this note:
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd;
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for your lady's: you may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.
Osw. Would I could meet him, madam! I should show
What party I do follow.
Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. *Fields near Dover.*

Enter Gloucester, *and* Edgar *dressed like a peasant.*

Glou. When shall we come to th' top of that same hill?
Edg. You do climb up it now: look, how we labour.
Glou. Methinks the ground is even.
Edg. Horribly steep.
Hark, do you hear the sea?
Glou. No, truly.
Edg. Why, then, your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.
Glou. So may it be, indeed:
Methinks thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.
Edg. You 're much deceiv'd: in nothing am I chang'd
But in my garments.
Glou. Methinks you 're better spoken.
Edg. Come on, sir; here 's the place: stand still. How fearful
And dizzy 't is, to cast one's eyes so low!

---

[25] *œillades* = amorous glances, sheep's eyes.
[29] *take this note* = take this information, take note of this.
[3] *Horribly:* the old copies *horrible*, a mere phonetic variation, not uncommon.

The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight: the murmuring surge,
That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I 'll look no more;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.
Glou. Set me where you stand.
Edg. Give me your hand; you are now within a foot
Of the extreme verge: for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.
Glou. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, 's another purse; in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking: fairies and gods
Prosper it with thee! Go thou farther off;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.
Edg. Now fare you well, good sir.
Glou. With all my heart.
Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.
Glou. [*Kneeling.*] O you mighty gods!
This world I do renounce, and, in your sights,
Shake patiently my great affliction off:
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathed part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O bless him!
Now, fellow, fare thee well.
Edg. Gone, sir: farewell.
And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft. [*Glou. throws himself forward.*] Had he been where he thought,
By this, had thought been past. Alive or dead?
Ho, you sir! friend! Hear you, sir! speak!
Thus might he pass indeed: yet he revives.
What are you, sir?
Glou. Away, and let me die.

---

[15] *samphire:* a wild sea-side plant, used for pickling: pronounced *sampeer.*
[36] *patiently* = sufferingly.
[47] *Thus might he pass* = even thus, being in his state of body and mind, he might die

Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou 'dst shiver'd like an egg: but thou dost breathe;
Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st; art sound.
Ten masts at least make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell:
Thy life 's a miracle. Speak yet again.
Glou. But have I fall'n, or no?
Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height; the shrill-gorged lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.
Glou. Alack, I have no eyes.
Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit,
To end itself by death? 'T was yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.
Edg. Give me your arm:
Up: so. How is 't? Feel you your legs? You stand.
Glou. Too well, too well.
Edg. This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o' th' cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?
Glou. A poor unfortunate beggar.
Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridged sea:
It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee.
Glou. I do remember now: henceforth I 'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself
"Enough, enough," and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 't would say
"The fiend, the fiend:" he led me to that place.
Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts. But who comes here?

Enter LEAR, *fantastically dressed with wild flowers.*

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.
Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining;
I am the King himself.
Edg. O thou side-piercing sight!

---

[57] *bourn* = boundary: "from whose bourne no traveller returns."

[72] *father:* addressed to Gloucester, without implying relationship, and merely because of his age.

[73] *clearest* = clearest sighted.

[81] *safer* = sound: the comparative, used to express superiority, as in "a better May," Act IV. Sc. 3.

Lear. Nature 's above art in that respect. There 's your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper: draw me a clothier's yard. Look, look, a mouse! Peace, peace; this piece of toasted cheese will do 't. There 's my gauntlet; I 'll prove it on a giant. Bring up the brown bills. O, well flown, bird! i' th' clout, i' th' clout: hewgh! Give the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glou. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril, with a white beard! They flattered me like a dog; and told me I had white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there. To say ay and no to every thing that I said ay and no to was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words: they told me I was every thing; 't is a lie, I am not ague-proof.

Glou. The trick of that voice I do well remember:
Is 't not the King?
Lear. Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?
Adultery?
Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
The wren goes to 't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight.
Let copulation thrive; for Glou'ster's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters
Got 'tween the lawful sheets.
To 't, luxury, pell-mell! for I lack soldiers.
Behold yond simpering dame,
Whose face between her forks presages snow;
That minces virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name;
The fitchew, nor the soiled horse, goes to 't
With a more riotous appetite.
Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
Though women all above:
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,

---

[87] *a crow-keeper* = one who keeps the crows away, a scarecrow: generally a ragged boy with a bow and arrows.

[91] *clout* = the white spot (originally a cloth) in the centre of the target.

[118] *between her forks presages snow* = hypocritically pretends to the absence of natural desire; an inversion of "Whose face presages snow between," etc.

[121] *fitchew* = polecat, slang for drab, strumpet. *soiled horse* = horse turned out to grass, to live upon the soil.

Beneath is all the fiends';
There 's hell, there 's darkness, there 's the sulphurous pit,
Burning, scalding, stench, consumption; fie, fie, fie! pah, pah!
Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination: there 's money for thee.

Glou. O, let me kiss that hand!

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

Glou. O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to nought. Dost thou know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I 'll not love. Read thou this challenge; mark but the penning of it.

Glou. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

Edg. [*Aside.*] I would not take this from report; it is;
And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Glou. What, with the case of eyes?

Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: yet you see how this world goes.

Glou. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Glou. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog 's obey'd in office.
Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none; I 'll able 'em:
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not. Now, now, now, now:
Pull off my boots: harder, harder: so.

---

139 *I would not take this*, etc.: that is, this meeting of the crazed king and his own blinded father.

142 *the case of eyes* = the mere sockets

164 *able 'em* = qualify them.

Edg. O, matter and impertinency mix'd!
Reason in madness!
Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough; thy name is Glou'ster:
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,
We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee: mark.
Glou. Alack, alack the day!
Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools. — This' a good block;
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe [*Taking Gloucester's hat.*
A troop of horse with felt: I 'll put 't in proof;
And when I have stol'n upon these sons-in-law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

Enter a Gentleman, *with* Attendants.

Gent. O, here he is: lay hand upon him. Sir,
Your most dear daughter —
Lear. No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of fortune. Use me well;
You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons;
I am cut to the brains.
Gent. You shall have any thing.
Lear. No seconds? all myself?
Why, this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
Ay, and laying autumn's dust.
Gent. Good sir, —
Lear. I will die bravely, like a bridegroom. What!
I will be jovial: come, come; I am a king,
My masters, know you that.
Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.
Lear. Then there 's life in 't. Nay, if you get it, you shall get it with running. Sa, sa, sa, sa. [*Exit running; Attendants follow.*
Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king! Thou hast one daughter,
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.
Edg. Hail, gentle sir.
Gent. Sir, speed you: what 's your will?
Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?
Gent. Most sure and vulgar: every one hears that,
Which can distinguish sound.
Edg. But, by your favour,
How near 's the other army?

---

199 *Sa, sa:* mere meaningless babble.
206 *vulgar* = common.

Gent. Near and on speedy foot; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.
Edg. I thank you, sir: that 's all.
Gent. Though that the Queen on special cause is here,
Her army is mov'd on.
Edg. I thank you, sir. [*Exit Gent.*
Glou. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me;
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please!
Edg. Well pray you, father.
Glou. Now, good sir, what are you?
Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I 'll lead you to some biding.
Glou. Hearty thanks:
The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember: the sword is out
That must destroy thee.
Glou. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to 't. [*Edgar interposes.*
Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that the infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.
Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.
Osw. Let go, slave, or thou diest!

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass. An chud ha' bin zwagger'd out of my life, 't would not ha' bin zo long as 't is by a vortnight. Nay, come not near th' old man; keep out, che vor ye, or ise try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder: chill be plain with you.

Osw. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir: come; no matter vor your foins. [*They fight, and Edgar knocks him down.*

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me: villain, take my purse:
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters which thou find'st about me

---

[232] *Chill:* a contraction of *ich will*, as *chud*, below, is for *ich would*. *Ich* = I, in O. E southern dialects.
[237] *che vor ye* = I warn you.
[238] *ballow* = staff.
[240] *your foins* = your fencing

To Edmund Earl of Glou'ster; seek him out
Upon the British party: O, untimely death! [*Dies.*
Edg. I know thee well: a serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness would desire.
Glou. What, is he dead?
Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you.
Let 's see these pockets: the letters that he speaks of
May be my friends. He 's dead; I am only sorry
He had no other death's-man. Let us see:
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:
To know our enemies' minds, we 'ld rip their hearts;
Their papers, is more lawful.

[*Reads.*] "Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror: then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.

"Your — wife, so I would say —
"Affectionate servant, Goneril."

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
And the exchange my brother! Here, in the sands,
Thee I 'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers: and in the mature time
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practis'd duke: for him 't is well
That of thy death and business I can tell.
Glou. The King is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes by wrong imaginations lose
The knowledge of themselves.
Edg. Give me your hand: [*Drum afar off.*
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum:
Come, father, I 'll bestow you with a friend. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII. *A tent in the French camp.* Lear *on a bed asleep, soft music playing;* Gentleman, *and others attending.*

Enter Cordelia, Kent, *and* Doctor.

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work,
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.

264 *O undistinguish'd space*, etc. = O boundlessness of woman's desires and purposes

Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.
Cor. Be better suited:
These weeds are memories of those worser hours:
I prithee, put them off.
Kent. Pardon me, dear madam;
Yet to be known shortens my made intent:
My boon I make it, that you know me not
Till time and I think meet.
Cor. Then be 't so, my good lord. [*To the Doctor.*] How does the King?
Doct. Madam, sleeps still.
Cor. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
The untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father!
Doct. So please your majesty
That we may wake the King: he hath slept long.
Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' th' sway of your own will. Is he array'd?
Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep
We put fresh garments on him.
Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.
Cor. Very well.
Doct. Please you, draw near. Louder the music there!
Cor. O my dear father! Restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!
Kent. Kind and dear princess!
Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face
To be oppos'd against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch — poor perdu! —
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!

[6] *better suited* = better dressed.
[35] *perdu* = lost one. (Fr.)
[40] *short and musty straw.* The fresh, unbroken straw was used for the beds of decent folk; when broken and soiled it went to barns and stables and sties.

'T is wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all. He wakes; speak to him.
Doct. Madam, do you; 't is fittest.
Cor. How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?
Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' th' grave:
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.
Cor. Sir, do you know me?
Lear. You are a spirit, I know: when did you die?
Cor. Still, still, far wide!
Doct. He 's scarce awake: let him alone awhile.
Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?
I am mightily abus'd. I should e'en die with pity,
To see another thus. I know not what to say.
I will not swear these are my hands: let 's see;
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assur'd
Of my condition!
Cor. O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:
—No, sir, you must not kneel.
Lear. Pray, do not mock me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
Cor. And so I am, I am.
Lear. Be your tears wet? yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.
Cor. No cause, no cause.
Lear. Am I in France?
Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.
Lear. Do not abuse me.
Doct. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.

---

80 *even o'er* = pass wholly over: "even" as a verb.

Desire him to go in; trouble him no more
Till further settling.
Cor. Will 't please your highness walk?
Lear. You must bear with me:
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am old and foolish.
[*Exeunt all but Kent and Gentleman.*

Gent. Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people?

Kent. As 't is said, the bastard son of Glou'ster.

Gent. They say Edgar, his banish'd son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable. 'T is time to look about; the powers of the kingdom approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kent. My point and period will be throughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle 's fought. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The British camp, near Dover.*

Enter, with drum and colours, EDMUND, REGAN, Gentlemen, *and* Soldiers.

Edm. Know of the Duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course: he 's full of alteration
And self-reproving: bring his constant pleasure.
[*To a Gentleman, who goes out.*
Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarri'd.
Edm. 'T is to be doubted, madam.
Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you:
Tell me — but truly — but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister?
Edm. In honour'd love.
Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forfended place?
Edm. That thought abuses you.
Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, — as far as we call hers.
Edm. No, by mine honour, madam.
Reg. I never shall endure her: dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

11 *forfended* = forbidden; the Fr. *défendu.*

Edm. Fear me not:
She and the Duke her husband!

Enter, with drum and colours, Albany, Goneril, *and* Soldiers.

Gon. [*Aside.*] I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me.
Alb. Our very loving sister, well be-met.
Sir, this I hear; the King is come to his daughter,
With others whom the rigour of our state
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant. For this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not bolds the King, with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.
Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.
Reg. Why is this reason'd?
Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.
Alb. Let's then determine
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.
Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.
Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?
Gon. No.
Reg. 'T is most convenient; pray you, go with us.
Gon. [*Aside.*] O, ho, I know the riddle. — I will go.

As they are going out, enter Edgar *disguised.*

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.
Alb. I'll overtake you. Speak.
[*Exeunt all but Albany and Edgar.*
Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!
Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.
Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.
Alb. Why, fare thee well: I will o'erlook thy paper.
[*Exit Edgar.*

---

[26] *Not bolds*, etc. This elliptical sentence may be thus written out: This business touches us because France invades our land; not because he emboldens the King and others, etc.

[32] *the ancient of war:* perhaps means experienced military officers; but I suspect the limping line is maimed, if not corrupt.

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy 's in view ; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery ; but your haste
Is now urged on you.
Alb. We will greet the time. [*Exit*
Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love ;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take ?
Both ? one ? or neither ? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive : to take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril ;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now then we 'll use
His countenance for the battle ; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon ; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A field between the two camps.*

Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours, LEAR, CORDELIA, *and* Soldiers, *over the stage ; and exeunt.*

Enter EDGAR *and* GLOUCESTER.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host ; pray that the right may thrive :
If ever I return to you again,
I 'll bring you comfort.
Glou. Grace go with you, sir ! [*Exit Edgar.*

Alarum and retreat within. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man ; give me thy hand ; away !
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en :
Give me thy hand ; come on.
Glou. No farther, sir ; a man may rot even here.
Edg. What, in ill thoughts again ? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither :
Ripeness is all : come on.
Glou. And that 's true too. [*Exeunt.*

[56] *jealous* = with hate in heart.
[68] *Shall never see* = loosely for, they shall never see.

Scene III. *The British camp near Dover.*

Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours, Edmund; Lear *and* Cordelia, *prisoners:* Captain, Soldiers, *etc.*

Edm. Some officers take them away: good guard,
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.
Cor. We are not the first
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?
Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let 's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I 'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we 'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we 'll talk with them too,
Who loses and who wins; who 's in, who 's out;
And take upon 's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies: and we 'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.
Edm. Take them away.
Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
The good-years shall devour them, flesh and fell,
Ere they shall make us weep: we 'll see 'em starve first.
Come. [*Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, guarded.*
Edm. Come hither, captain; hark.
Take thou this note [*giving a paper*]; go follow them to prison:
One step I have advanc'd thee; if thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes: know thou this, that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword: thy great employment
Will not bear question; either say thou 'lt do 't,
Or thrive by other means.

---

[23] *like foxes*=as if we were foxes, which were sometimes driven out of their holes by fire.

[24] *The good years.* This phrase was originally *goujères*=a loathsome disease; but (like "hawk from a heron-shaw," see *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 2) it had been misunderstood, perverted, and was used in the sense of its plain English sound.

Capt. I 'll do 't, my lord.
Edm. About it; and write happy when thou hast done.
Mark, I say, instantly; and carry it so
As I have set it down.
Capt. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work, I 'll do 't. [*Exit.*

Flourish. Enter ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, *another* Captain, *and* Soldiers.

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well: you have the captives
That were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.
Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the Queen;
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd
By those that feel their sharpness:
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.
Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.
Reg. That 's as we list to grace him.
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.
Gon. Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your addition.
Reg. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best.
Gon. That were the most, if he should husband you.

---

35 *write happy* = write yourself down as happy. So "I write good creature," *All 's Well That Ends Well*, Act III. Sc. 5, line 69, and elsewhere.
40 *strain* = race, blood.
50 *impress'd lances* = men at arms who had been pressed into service.

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.
Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.
Reg. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach. General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine:
Witness the world, that I create thee here
My lord and master.
Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?
Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.
Edm. Nor in thine, lord.
Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.
Reg. [*To Edmund.*] Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.
Alb. Stay yet; hear reason. Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason; and, in thine attaint,
This gilded serpent. [*Pointing to Gon.*] For your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife:
'T is she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your loves to me,
My lady is bespoke.
Gon. An interlude!
Alb. Thou art arm'd, Glou'ster: let the trumpet sound:
If none appear to prove upon thy head
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge [*Throwing down a glove*]; I'll prove it on thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.
Reg. Sick, O, sick!
Gon. [*Aside.*] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.
Edm. There 's my exchange [*Throwing down a glove*]: what in the world he is
That names me traitor, villain-like he lies:
Call by thy trumpet: he that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not? I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.
Alb. A herald, ho!
Edm. A herald, ho, a herald!
Alb. Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.
Reg. My sickness grows upon me.

Alb. She is not well; convey her to thy tent. [*Exit Regan, led.*

Enter a Herald.

Come hither, herald, — Let the trumpet sound, —
And read out this.
Capt. Sound, trumpet! [*A trumpet sounds.*

Her. [*Reads.*] "If any man of quality or degree within the lists of the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet: he is bold in his defence."

Edm. Sound! [*First trumpet.*
Her. Again! [*Second trumpet.*
Her. Again! [*Third trumpet.*
[*Trumpet answers within.*

Enter EDGAR, *at the third sound, armed, with a trumpet before him.*

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' th' trumpet.
Her. What are you?
Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?
Edg. Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit:
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope.
Alb. Which is that adversary?
Edg. What 's he that speaks for Edmund Earl of Glou'ster?
Edm. Himself: what say'st thou to him?
Edg. Draw thy sword,
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice: here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession: I protest,
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour and thy heart, thou art a traitor;
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high-illustrious prince;
And, from the extremest upward of thy head
To the descent and dust below thy foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou "No,"
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.
Edm. In wisdom I should ask thy name;

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[128] *the privilege of mine honours* = my privilege as a nobleman; "honours" not meaning personal honour, but the honours pertaining to his rank, which he now asserts and means to maintain.

But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some 'say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay,
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn:
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
Which, for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise,
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever. Trumpets, speak!
[*Alarums. They fight. Edmund falls.*
Alb. Save him, save him!
Gon. This is mere practice, Glou'ster:
By the law of arms thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.
Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it: Hold, sir;
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil:
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it. [*Gives the letter to Edmund.*
Gon. Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine:
Who can arraign me for 't?
Alb. Most monstrous! oh!
Know'st thou this paper?
Gon. Ask me not what I know. [*Exit.*
Alb. Go after her: she 's desperate; govern her.
Edm. What you have charg'd me with, that have I done;
And more, much more; the time will bring it out:
'T is past, and so am I. But what art thou
That hast this fortune on me? If thou 'rt noble,
I do forgive thee.
Edg. Let 's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.
Edm. Thou hast spoken right, 't is true;
The wheel is come full circle; I am here.
Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness: I must embrace thee:
Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
Did hate thee or thy father!

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142 *'say* = assay, proof.
143 *nicely* = carefully, if I were particular.
150 *mere practice* = nothing but an evil scheme.

Edg. Worthy prince, I know 't.
Alb. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?
Edg. By nursing them, my lord. List a brief tale;
And when 't is told, oh, that my heart would burst!
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near, — oh, our lives' sweetness!
That we the pain of death would hourly die
Rather than die at once! — taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags; t' assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd: and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost; became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;
Never, — O fault! — reveal'd myself unto him,
Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd:
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage: but his flaw'd heart,
Alack, too weak the conflict to support!
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.
Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
And shall perchance do good: but speak you on;
You look as you had something more to say.
Alb. If there be more, more woeful, hold it in;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.
Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour came therein a man,
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 't was that so endur'd, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he 'ld burst heaven; threw him on my father;
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear received: which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack: twice then the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranc'd.
Alb. But who was this?
Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise

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212 *threw him* = threw himself.

Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave.

Enter a Gentleman, *with a bloody knife.*

Gent. Help, help, O, help!
Edg. What kind of help?
Alb. Speak, man.
Edg. What means that bloody knife?
Gent. 'T is hot, it smokes;
It came even from the heart of—O, she 's dead!
Alb. Who dead? speak, man.
Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poison'd; she hath confess'd it.
Edm. I was contracted to them both: all three
Now marry in an instant.
Edg. Here comes Kent.
Alb. Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead:
This judgement of the heavens, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity. [*Exit Gentleman.*

Enter Kent.

O, is this he?
The time will not allow the compliment
Which very manners urges.
Kent. I am come
To bid my king and master aye good night:
Is he not here?
Alb. Great thing of us forgot!
Speak, Edmund, where 's the King? and where 's Cordelia?
See'st thou this object, Kent?
[*The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in.*
Kent. Alack, why thus?
Edm. Yet Edmund was beloved:
The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.
Alb. Even so. Cover their faces.
Edm. I pant for life: some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,
Be brief in it, to the castle; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia:
Nay, send in time.
Alb. Run, run, O, run!
Edg. To who, my lord? Who hath the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.
Edm. Well thought on: take my sword,
Give it the captain.
Alb. Haste thee, for thy life. [*Exit Edgar.*
Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me

To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.
Alb. The gods defend her! Bear him hence awhile.
[*Edmund is borne off.*

Re-enter LEAR, *with* CORDELIA *dead in his arms;* EDGAR, Captain, *and others following.*

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:
Had I your tongues and eyes, I 'ld use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She 's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She 's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.
Kent. Is this the promis'd end?
Edg. Or image of that horror?
Alb. Fall, and cease!
Lear. This feather stirs; she lives! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.
Kent. [*Kneeling.*] O my good master!
Lear. Prithee, away.
Edg. 'T is noble Kent, your friend.
Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
I might have sav'd her; now she 's gone for ever!
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!
What is 't thou say'st? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low; an excellent thing in woman.
I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.
Capt. 'T is true, my lords, he did.
Lear. Did I not, fellow?
I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' th' best: I 'll tell you straight.
Kent. If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
One of them we behold.
Lear. This is a dull light. Are you not Kent?
Kent. The same,
Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?
Lear. He 's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He 'll strike, and quickly too: he 's dead and rotten.
Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man,—
Lear. I 'll see that straight.

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[263] *Fall, and cease.* Unless this means, Let the world fall to ruin, I am unable to apprehend it. None of the many attempts to explain it heretofore within the last hundred years seem to me at all to the purpose.

[281] *a dull light.* Lear's eyes are dimming.

Kent. — That, from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.
Lear. You are welcome hither.
Kent. Nor no man else: all 's cheerless, dark, and deadly.
Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
And desperately are dead.
Lear. Ay, so I think.
Alb. He knows not what he says: and vain it is
That we present us to him.
Edg. Very bootless.

Enter a Captain.

Capt. Edmund is dead, my lord.
Alb. That 's but a trifle here.
You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come
Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power: [*To Edgar and Kent*] you, to your rights;
With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited. All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings. O, see, see!
Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou 'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!
Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir.
Do you see this? Look on her, look, her lips,
Look there, look there! [*Dies.*
Edg. He faints! My lord, my lord!
Kent. Break, heart; I prithee, break!
Edg. Look up, my lord.
Kent. Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! he hates him much
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.
Edg. He is gone, indeed.
Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long:
He but usurp'd his life.
Alb. Bear them from hence. Our present business

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[304] *my poor fool* = Cordelia; an utterance of tenderness and woe. See *Shakespeare's Scholar*, 1854.

[313] *this tough world:* thus read the folio and the two quartos. The third quarto has "rough world," a reading which has a charm and gives a new significance. But racks are tough rather than rough; and the evidence much preponderates in favor of that word.

Is general woe. [*To Kent and Edgar.*] Friends of my soul,
you twain
Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.
Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
My master calls me; I must not say no.
Alb. The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.
[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*

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318 *Friends of my soul*, etc. Were it not that S. always falls into feebleness with rhyme, I should believe that these words and the seven following lines were a tag added to please the players and the vulgar among the audience. Without them Albany's speech would close the tragedy with a note like that of the last lines of *Hamlet*. Indeed, I am at every reading of them nearer being sure that they are not from the hand that wrote the rest of this tragedy.

OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE.

INTRODUCTION.

An Italian *novella*, by Giraldi Cinthio, published in 1565, furnished the plot of this tragedy and the principal personages, all of whom are nameless in the tale, except the Moor's wife, who is called Desdemona. Shakespeare greatly modified the incidents of Cinthio's story, which is rude, although not without spirit and an air of reality; and he also lifted the action from the level of coarse intrigue and brutal murder into the highest region of tragic art. The catastrophe is of his conception, the Moor of the *novella* being tried, tortured, banished, and finally put to death by Desdemona's kinsmen. *Othello* was one of Shakespeare's most admired and most popular plays ; and yet, strangely, it was not published until 1622, six years after his death. The next year it was printed in the first edition of his collected dramas. The variations in the texts of these editions show that they were derived from different manuscripts. The folio text, generally the better, shows here and there the touches of an improving hand. It also is purged of some oaths and invocations to Deity which are found in the quarto text. This seems to be in conformity to a statute against profanity in stage plays, which was passed in 1606; in which case the tragedy must have been written before that year. But the evidence as to the date of the writing of *Othello* is very confusing. A mention of it in the *Accounts of the Revels at Court*, as having been performed November 1, 1604, has been pronounced a forgery. The line " But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts," seems an undeniable reference to the introduction of the red hand into the arms of the order of baronets, which was instituted in 1611. There is authentic record of the performance of *Othello* in April, 1610. It is more than possible that the tragedy was originally written before 1606 (in 1605 or 1604), and that it afterwards received additions on some special occasion. Certainly it is the fruit of that season of Shakespeare's life which produced *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*. The period of the action is the early part of the sixteenth century. The text is notably clean and sound; having very few important corruptions. It is one of the purest and most absolutely Shakespearean of these dramas, being without a trace of a second hand or of an earlier work.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Duke of Venice.
Brabantio, *a senator.*
Other Senators.
Gratiano, *brother to Brabantio.*
Lodovico, *kinsman to Brabantio.*
Othello, *a noble Moor in the military service of the Venetian state.*
Cassio, *his lieutenant.*
Iago, *his ensign.*
Roderigo, *a Venetian gentleman.*
Montano, *Othello's predecessor in the government of Cyprus.*
Clown, servant to Othello.

Desdemona, *daughter to Brabantio and wife to Othello.*
Emilia, *wife to Iago.*
Bianca, *mistress to Cassio.*

Sailor, Messenger, Herald, Officers, Gentlemen, Musicians, and Attendants.

Scene: Venice: a sea-port in Cyprus.

OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE

ACT I.

Scene I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter Roderigo *and* Iago.

Rod. Tush! never tell me; I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this.
Iago. 'Sblood, but you will not hear me:
If ever I did dream of such a matter,
Abhor me.
Rod. Thou told'st me thou didst hold him in thy hate.
Iago. Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him: and, by the faith of man,
I know my price; I am worth no worse a place:
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
And, in conclusion,
Nonsuits my mediators; for, "Certes," says he,
"I have already chose my officer."
And what was he?
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoric,
Wherein the toged consuls can propose
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election:
And I, of whom his eyes had seen the proof

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[21] *in a fair wife.* If this be not an error (caused by the old-fashioned long *ſ*, hardly to be distinguished from *f*) for a fair wise = a fair way, just judgment, I must abandon the passage as incomprehensible. For the quarto and the folio agree in this reading; and to suppose that there is an allusion here to Bianca seems to me absurd.

[28] *his eyes:* Othello's.

At Rhodes, at Cyprus and on other grounds
Christian and heathen, must be be-lee'd and calm'd
By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster:
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I — God bless the mark! — his Moorship's ancient.
Rod. By heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.
Iago. Why, there 's no remedy; 't is the curse of service,
Preferment goes by letter and affection,
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affin'd
To love the Moor.
Rod. I would not follow him then.
Iago. O, sir, content you;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
For nought but provender, and when he 's old, cashier'd:
Whip me such honest knaves. Others there are
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them and when they have lin'd their coats
Do themselves homage: these fellows have some soul;
And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:
In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 't is not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.
Rod. What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,
If he can carry 't thus!

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[31] *counter-caster.* Of old counters were used in reckoning.

[33] *ancient:* a mere phonetic corruption of "ensign" consequent upon the pronunciation of *e* as short *a*, and of *s* before a vowel as *sh*: *ancient* was pronounced, not *ane-shent*, but *an-shent*, until a late period.

[45] *knave* = servant.

[50] *Who trimm'd*, etc. Not improbably S. wrote "*trained* in forms and *usages*," etc.

[66] *thick-lips.* S.'s notions about Moors and negroes were, we may be sure, far from being clear and discriminating; and it is to be remarked that even Moors have thicker lips than the white European races.

Iago. Call up her father,
Rouse him: make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on 't,
As it may lose some colour.
Rod. Here is her father's house; I 'll call aloud.
Iago. Do, with like timorous accent and dire yell
As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.
Rod. What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!
Iago. Awake! what, ho, Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

Brabantio *appears above, at a window.*

Bra. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?
Rod. Signior, is all your family within?
Iago. Are your doors lock'd?
Bra. Why, wherefore ask you this?
Iago. 'Zounds, sir, you 're robb'd; for shame, put on your gown;
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:
Arise, I say.
Bra. What, have you lost your wits?
Rod. Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?
Bra. Not I: what are you?
Rod. My name is Roderigo.
Bra. The worser welcome:
I have charg'd thee not to haunt about my doors:
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper and distempering draughts,
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come
To start my quiet.
Rod. Sir, sir, sir,—
Bra. But thou must needs be sure
My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.
Rod. Patience, good sir.

Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice;
My house is not a grange.
Rod. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago. 'Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will not serve God, if the Devil bid you. Because we come to do you service and you think we are ruffians, you 'll have your daughter cover'd with a Barbary horse; you 'll have your nephews neigh to you; you 'll have coursers for cousins and gennets for germans.

Bra. What profane wretch art thou?

Iago. I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs.

Bra. Thou art a villain.
Iago. You are — a senator.
Bra. This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.
Rod. Sir, I will answer any thing. But, I beseech you,
If 't be your pleasure and most wise consent,
As partly I find it is, that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o' th' night,
Transported, with no worse nor better guard
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor, —
If this be known to you and your allowance,
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
But if you know not this, my manners tell me
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
Your daughter, if you have not given her leave,
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;
Tying her duty, beauty, wit and fortunes
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and every where. Straight satisfy yourself:
If she be in her chamber or your house,
Let loose on me the justice of the state
For thus deluding you.
Bra. Strike on the tinder, ho!
Give me a taper! call up all my people!
This accident is not unlike my dream:
Belief of it oppresses me already.
Light, I say! light! [*Exit above.*
Iago. Farewell; for I must leave you:
It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,

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[106] *a grange* = a lonely farm-house of the higher class.
[112] *germans* = kinsmen, cousins german.
[134] *extravagant and wheeling stranger* = a wandering, vagabond adventurer.

To be produc'd — as, if I stay, I shall —
Against the Moor: for, I do know, the state,
However this may gall him with some check,
Cannot with safety cast him, for he 's embark'd
With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars,
Which even now stand in act, that, for their souls,
Another of his fadom they have none,
To lead their business: in which regard,
Though I do hate him as I do hell-pains,
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find him,
Lead to the Sagittary the raised search;
And there will I be with him. So, farewell. [*Exit.*

Enter, below, BRABANTIO, *and* Servants *with torches.*

Bra. It is too true an evil: gone she is;
And what 's to come of my despised time
Is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her? O unhappy girl!
With the Moor, say'st thou? Who would be a father!
How didst thou know 't was she? O, she deceives me
Past thought! What said she to you? Get more tapers;
Raise all my kindred. Are they married, think you?
Rod. Truly, I think they are.
Bra. O heaven! How got she out? O treason of the blood!
Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act. Is there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abus'd? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?
Rod. Yes, sir, I have indeed.
Bra. Call up my brother. O, would you had had her!
Some one way, some another. Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?
Rod. I think I can discover him, if you please
To get good guard and go along with me.
Bra. Pray you, lead on. At every house I 'll call;
I may command at most. Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of night.
On, good Roderigo: I 'll deserve your pains. [*Exeunt.*

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156 *Sagittary* = the archer-centaur; used as the ornament or sign of a house.

Scene II. *Another street.*

Enter Othello, Iago, *and* Attendants *with torches.*

Iago. Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff o' th' conscience
To do no contriv'd murder: I lack iniquity
Sometimes to do me service: nine or ten times
I 'd thought t' have jerk'd him here under the ribs.
Oth. 'T is better as it is.
Iago. Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your honour
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,
Are you fast married? Be assur'd of this,
That the magnifico is much belov'd,
And hath in his effect a voice potential
As double as the Duke's: he will divorce you;
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law, with all his might to enforce it on,
Will give him cable.
Oth. Let him do his spite;
My services which I have done the signiory
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'T is yet to know,—
Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
I shall promulgate — I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege, and my demerits
May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd: for know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come yond?
Iago. Those are the raised father and his friends:
You were best go in.
Oth. Not I: I must be found:
My parts, my title and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?
Iago. By Janus, I think no.

Enter Cassio, *and certain* Officers *with torches.*

Oth. The servants of the Duke, and my lieutenant.

---

[5] *jerk'd:* the quarto *ierk'd*, the folio *yerk'd;* both mere phonetic spellings of *jerked*, which is found in the second and third quartos.

[14] *As double:* a doubtful reading; but it may possibly mean merely as potential.

[22] *demerits* = merits, deserving.

[23] *unbonneted.* The question of manners in S.'s time as to the hat seems very difficult. The remembering courtesy, the off-capping, and the unbonneting are quite incongruous. No attempt to reconcile these expressions has been at all successful.

The goodness of the night upon you, friends!
What is the news?
Cas. The Duke does greet you, general,
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance,
Even on the instant.
Oth. What is the matter, think you?
Cas. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine:
It is a business of some heat: the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night at one another's heels,
And many of the consuls, rais'd and met,
Are at the Duke's already: you have been hotly call'd for;
When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The Senate hath sent about three several quests
To search you out.
Oth. 'T is well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you. [*Exit.*
Cas. Ancient, what makes he here?
Iago. 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carack:
If it prove lawful prize, he 's made for ever.
Cas. I do not understand.
Iago. He 's married.
Cas. To who?

Re-enter OTHELLO.

Iago. Marry, to — Come, captain, will you go?
Oth. Have with you.
Cas. Here comes another troop to seek for you.
Iago. It is Brabantio. General, be advis'd;
He comes to bad intent.

Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, *and* Officers *with torches and weapons.*

Oth. Holla! stand there!
Rod. Signior, it is the Moor.
Bra. Down with him, thief!
[*They draw on both sides.*
Iago. You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.
Oth. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.
Good signior, you shall more command with years
Than with your weapons.
Bra. O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my daughter?
Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;
For I 'll refer me to all things of sense,
If she in chains of magic were not bound,
Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy,
So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,

Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou, to fear, not to delight.
Judge me the world, if 't is not gross in sense
That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms,
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals
That waken motion: I 'll have 't disputed on;
'T is probable and palpable to thinking.
I therefore apprehend and do attach thee
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.
Lay hold upon him: if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.
Oth. Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest:
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter. Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge?
Bra. To prison, till fit time
Of law and course of direct session
Call thee to answer.
Oth. What if I do obey?
How may the Duke be therewith satisfied,
Whose messengers are here about my side,
Upon some present business of the state
To bring me to him?
First Off. 'T is true, most worthy signior;
The Duke 's in council, and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.
Bra. How! the Duke in council!
In this time of the night! Bring him away:
Mine 's not an idle cause: the Duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the state,
Cannot but feel this wrong as 't were their own;
For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A council-chamber.*

The Duke *and* Senators *sitting at a table;* Officers *attending.*

Duke. There is no composition in these news
That gives them credit.
First Sen. Indeed, they are disproportion'd;
My letters say a hundred and seven galleys.

---

[75] *That waken motion* = that excite the desires of love.
[1] *composition* = coherence.

Duke. And mine, a hundred and forty.
Sec. Sen. And mine, two hundred!
But though they jump not on a just account, —
As in these cases, where the aim reports,
'T is oft with difference — yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.
Duke. Nay, it is possible enough to judgement:
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.
Sailor. [*Within.*] What, ho! what, ho! what, ho!
First Off. A messenger from the galleys.

Enter a Sailor.

Duke. Now, what 's the business?
Sail. The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes;
So was I bid report here to the state
By Signior Angelo.
Duke. How say you by this change?
First Sen. This cannot be,
By no assay of reason: 't is a pageant,
To keep us in false gaze. When we consider
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk,
And let ourselves again but understand,
That as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,
So may he with more facile question bear it,
For that it stands not in such warlike brace,
But altogether lacks the abilities
That Rhodes is dress'd in: if we make thought of this,
We must not think the Turk is so unskilful
To leave that latest which concerns him first,
Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain,
To wake and wage a danger profitless.
Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he 's not for Rhodes.
First Off. Here is more news.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course towards the isle of Rhodes,
Have there injointed them with an after fleet.
First Sen. Ay, so I thought. How many, as you guess?
Mess. Of thirty sail: and now they do re-stem
Their backward course, bearing with frank appearance
Their purposes towards Cyprus. Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,

---

[24] *warlike brace* = warlike strain, military necessity or compulsion.
[35] *injointed* = united.
[37] *re-stem* = turn prow on.

With his free duty recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him.
Duke. 'T is certain, then, for Cyprus.
Marcus Luccicos, is not he in town?
First Sen. He 's now in Florence.
Duke. Write from us to him; post-post-haste dispatch.
First Sen. Here comes Brabantio and the valiant Moor.

Enter Brabantio, Othello, Iago, Roderigo, *and* Officers.

Duke. Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you
Against the general enemy Ottoman.
[*To Brabantio.*] I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior;
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.
Bra. So did I yours. Good your grace, pardon me;
Neither my place nor aught I heard of business
Hath rais'd me from my bed, nor doth the general care
Take hold on me; for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature
That it engluts and swallows other sorrows
And it is still itself.
Duke. Why, what 's the matter?
Bra. My daughter! O, my daughter!
Duke and Sen. Dead?
Bra. Ay, to me;
She is abus'd, stol'n from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks;
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
Sans witchcraft could not.
Duke. Whoe'er he be that in this foul proceeding
Hath thus beguil'd your daughter of herself
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter
After your own sense, yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.
Bra. Humbly I thank your grace.
Here is the man, — this Moor, whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate for the state affairs
Hath hither brought.
Duke and Sen. We are very sorry for 't.
Duke. [*To Othello.*] What, in your own part, can you say to this?
Bra. Nothing, but this is so.
Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approved good masters,
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,

---

64 *Sans* = without. (Fr.)

It is most true; true, I have married her:
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, — no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace:
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
Their dearest action in the tented field,
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle,
And therefore little shall I grace my cause
In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what charms,
What conjuration and what mighty magic,
(For such proceeding I am charg'd withal,)
I won his daughter.
Bra. A maiden never bold;
Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
Blush'd at herself; and she, in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, every thing,
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!
It is a judgement maim'd and most imperfect
That will confess perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature, and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning hell,
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
He wrought upon her.
Duke. To vouch this is no proof,
Without more wider and more overt test
Than these thin habits and poor likelihoods
Of modern seeming do prefer against him.
First Sen. But, Othello, speak:
Did you by indirect and forced courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
Or came it by request and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?
Oth. I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,
And let her speak of me before her father:
If you do find me foul in her report,

---

[94] *I won his daughter.* Here "with" is recklessly omitted.

[95] *her motion* = her natural desires. In the next line, "herself" does not refer to Desdemona, but to "motion."

[108] *thin habits* = slight outward shows.

[109] *modern seeming* = trivial, unimportant significance.

The trust, the office I do hold of you,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.
Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.
Oth. Ancient, conduct them; you best know the place.
[*Exeunt Iago and Attendants.*
And, till she come, as truly as to heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I 'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.
Duke. Say it, Othello.
Oth. Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
To the very moment that he bade me tell it;
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' th' imminent deadly breach,
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence
And portance in my travels' history:
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks and hills whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak, — such was the process;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline:
But still the house-affairs would draw her thence:
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,
She 'ld come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse: which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour, and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively: I did consent,
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:

---

139 *portance* = carrying on, progress.
140 *antres* = caves. *idle* = unoccupied, barren.
144 *Anthropophagi* = man-eaters. (Gr.)

She swore, in faith, 't was strange, 't was passing strange,
'T was pitiful, 't was wondrous pitiful:
She wish'd she had not heard it; yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man. She thank'd me,
And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake:
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I lov'd her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd:
Here comes the lady; let her witness it.

Enter DESDEMONA, IAGO, *and* Attendants.

Duke. I think this tale would win my daughter too.
Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best:
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.
Bra. I pray you, hear her speak:
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man! Come hither, gentle mistress:
Do you perceive in all this noble company
Where most you owe obedience?
Des. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty:
To you I am bound for life and education;
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you; you are the lord of duty;
I am hitherto your daughter: but here 's my husband;
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.
Bra. God be wi' you! I have done.
Please it your grace, on to the state-affairs:
I had rather to adopt a child than get it.
Come hither, Moor:
I here do give thee that with all my heart
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee. For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them. I have done, my lord.
Duke. Let me speak like yourself, and lay a sentence,
Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserved when fortune takes
Patience her injury a mockery makes.
The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.
Bra. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;
We lose it not, so long as we can smile.
He bears the sentence well that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears,
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal:
But words are words; I never yet did hear
That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the ear.
I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus. Othello, the fortitude of the place is best known to you; and though we have there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice on you: you must therefore be content to slubber the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down: I do agnize
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness, and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites.
Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife,
Due reference of place and exhibition,
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her breeding.
Duke. If you please,
Be 't at her father's.
Bra. I 'll not have it so.
Oth. Nor I.
Des. Nor I; I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts
By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,

---

230 *agnize*=acknowledge; a word not rare in S.'s day.
236 *exhibition*=allowance of money.

To my unfolding lend your prosperous ear;
And let me find a charter in your voice,
To assist my simpleness.
Duke. What would you, Desdemona?
Des. That I did love the Moor to live with him,
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world: my heart 's subdued
Even to the very quality of my lord:
I saw Othello's visage in his mind,
And to his honours and his valiant parts
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
The rites for which I love him are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.
Oth. Let her have your voices.
Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore beg it not,
To please the palate of my appetite,
Nor to comply with heat — the young affects
In me defunct — and proper satisfaction,
But to be free and bounteous to her mind:
And heaven defend your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant
For she is with me: no, when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dullness
My speculative and offic'd instruments,
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation!
Duke. Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay or going: the affair cries haste,
And speed must answer it.
First Sen. You must away to-night.
Oth. With all my heart.
Duke. At nine i' th' morning here we 'll meet again.
Othello, leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you:
With such things else of quality and respect
As doth import you.
Oth. So please your grace, my ancient;

---

[262] *affects* = affections, passions. This parenthetic passage is in a very doubtful condition. The old copies have "in *my* defunct," in the next line; and there is no indication of parenthesis. The confession put into Othello's mouth is the last that a lover would make, and on this occasion; especially after Desdemona's foregoing speech.

[268] *seel* = blind; a falconer's phrase.

A man he is of honesty and trust:
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good grace shall think
To be sent after me.
Duke. Let it be so.
Good night to every one. [*To Bra.*] And, noble signior,
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.
First Sen. Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona well.
Bra. Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see:
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.
[*Exeunt Duke, Senators, Officers, etc.*
Oth. My life upon her faith! Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee:
I prithee, let thy wife attend on her:
And bring them after in the best advantage.
Come, Desdemona: I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,
To spend with thee: we must obey the time.
[*Exeunt Othello and Desdemona.*
Rod. Iago, —
Iago. What say'st thou, noble heart?
Rod. What will I do, think'st thou?
Iago. Why, go to bed, and sleep.
Rod. I will incontinently drown myself.

Iago. If thou dost, I shall never love thee after. Why, thou silly gentleman!

Rod. It is silliness to live when to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician.

Iago. O villanous! I have look'd upon the world for four times seven years; and since I could distinguish betwixt a benefit and an injury, I never found man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say, I would drown myself for the love of a guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Rod. What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

Iago. Virtue! a fig! 't is in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness, or manured with industry, why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most prepost'rous conclusions: but we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts, whereof I take this that you call love to be a sect or scion.

Rod. It cannot be.

Iago. It is merely a lust of the blood and a permission of the will. Come, be a man. Drown thyself! drown cats and blind puppies. I have profess'd me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness; I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow thou the wars; defeat thy favour with an usurp'd beard; I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor, — put money in thy purse, — nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration: — put but money in thy purse. These Moors are changeable in their wills: — fill thy purse with money: — the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice: she must have change, she must: therefore put money in thy purse. If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst: if sanctimony and a frail vow betwixt an erring barbarian and a supersubtle Venetian be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! it is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hang'd in compassing thy joy than to be drown'd and go without her.

Rod. Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?

Iago. Thou art sure of me: — go, make money: — I had told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: my cause is hearted; thine hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time which will be delivered. Traverse! go, provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

Rod. Where shall we meet i' th' morning?

Iago. At my lodging.

Rod. I'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

Rod. What say you?

Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear?

Rod. I am chang'd: I'll go sell all my land. [*Exit.*

---

[334] *defeat thy favour* = disguise thy countenance.

[347] *erring barbarian.* It has been plausibly proposed to read "*arrant* barbarian."

[359] *Traverse:* a word of command in pike or musket drill, referring to the handling of the arm. See 2 *Henry IV.*, Act III. Sc. 2.

Iago. Thus do I ever make my fool my purse:
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
If I would time expend with such a snipe,
But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;
And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office: I know not if 't be true;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do as if for surety. He holds me well;
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio 's a proper man: let me see now:
To get his place and to plume up my will
In double knavery — How, how? — Let 's see: —
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear
That he is too familiar with his wife.
He hath a person and a smooth dispose
To be suspected, fram'd to make women false.
The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,
And will as tenderly be led by the nose
As asses are.
I have 't. It is engender'd. Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A sea-port in Cyprus. An open place near the quay.*

Enter MONTANO *and two* Gentlemen.

Mon. What from the cape can you discern at sea?
First Gent. Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood;
I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,
Descry a sail.
Mon. Methinks the wind hath spoke aloud at land;
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
Can hold the mortise? What shall we hear of this?
Sec. Gent. A segregation of the Turkish fleet:
For do but stand upon the foaming shore,
The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds;
The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous mane,
Seems to cast water on the burning bear,
And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole:

[378] *a proper man* = a handsome man.
[10] *segregation:* opposite of congregation; an extraordinary use of the word.

I never did like molestation view
On the enchafed flood.
Mon. If that the Turkish fleet
Be not enshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd;
It is impossible they bear it out.

Enter a third Gentleman.

Third Gent. News, lads! our wars are done.
The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks,
That their designment halts: a noble ship of Venice
Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance
On most part of their fleet.
Mon. How! is this true?
Third Gent. The ship is here put in.
A Veronese, Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor Othello,
Is come on shore: the Moor himself at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.
Mon. I am glad on 't; 't is a worthy governor.
Third Gent. But this same Cassio, though he speak of comfort
Touching the Turkish loss, yet he looks sadly,
And prays the Moor be safe; for they were parted
With foul and violent tempest.
Mon. Pray heavens he be;
For I have serv'd him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier. Let 's to the seaside, ho!
As well to see the vessel that 's come in
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello,
Even till we make the main and the aerial blue
An indistinct regard.
Third Gent. Come, let 's do so;
For every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivance.

Enter CASSIO.

Cas. Thanks, you the valiant of this warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor! O, let the heavens
Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea.
Mon. Is he well shipp'd?
Cas. His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot
Of very expert and approv'd allowance;
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure. [*A cry within* "A sail, a sail, a sail!"

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[26] *A Veronese:* a quadrisyllable. S. seems here to have forgotten that he had made Cassio a Florentine.

[49] *expert:* accented on the first syllable. *allowance* = acknowledged merit, reputation.

Enter a fourth Gentleman.

Cas. What noise?
Fourth Gent. The town is empty; on the brow o' th' sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry "A sail!"
Cas. My hopes do shape him for the governor. [*Guns heard.*
Sec. Gent. They do discharge their shot of courtesy:
Our friends at least.
Cas. I pray you, sir, go forth,
And give us truth who 't is that is arriv'd.
Sec. Gent. I shall. [*Exit.*
Mon. But, good lieutenant, is your general wiv'd?
Cas. Most fortunately: he hath achiev'd a maid
That paragons description and wild fame;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And in the essential vesture of creation
Does bear all excellence.

Re-enter second Gentleman.

How now! who has put in?
Sec. Gent. 'T is one Iago, ancient to the general.
Cas. Has had most favourable and happy speed:
Tempests themselves, high seas and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks and congregated sands,—
Traitors ensteep'd to clog the guiltless keel,—
As having sense of beauty, do omit
Their mortal natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.
Mon. What is she?
Cas. She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago,
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts
A se'nnight's speed. Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort!

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO, *and* Attendants.

O, behold,
The riches of the ship is come on shore!
Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees.
Hail, to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round!

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[65] *Does bear all excellence.* This is the reading of the quarto, which, however, prints *excellency.* The folio has, "Does tire the Ingeniure," from which no tolerable reading or sense has yet been extracted.

[67] *Has had most favourable:* that is, He has had, etc.; the elision of the pronoun elsewhere remarked upon.

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.
What tidings can you tell me of my lord?
Cas. He is not yet arriv'd: nor know I aught
But that he's well and will be shortly here.
Des. O, but I fear — How lost you company?
Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship — But, hark! a sail.
[*Within*, "A sail, a sail!" *Guns heard.*
Sec. Gent. They give their greeting to the citadel:
This likewise is a friend.
Cas. See for the news. [*Exit Gentleman.*
Good ancient, you are welcome. [*To Emilia.*] Welcome, mistress:
Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners; 't is my breeding
That gives me this bold show of courtesy. [*Kissing her*
Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her lips
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You 'ld have enough.
Des. Alas, she has no speech.
Iago. In faith, too much;
I find it still, when I have list to sleep:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.
Emil. You have little cause to say so.
Iago. Come on, come on; you are pictures out of doors,
Bells in your parlours, wild-cats in your kitchens,
Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.
Des. O, fie upon thee, slanderer!
Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk:
You rise to play and go to bed to work.
Emil. You shall not write my praise.
Iago. No, let me not.
Des. What wouldst thou write of me, if thou shouldst praise me?
Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to 't;
For I am nothing, if not critical.
Des. Come on, assay. There 's one gone to the harbour?
Iago. Ay, madam.
Des. I am not merry; but I do beguile
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise.
Come, how wouldst thou praise me?

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112 *housewives in your beds.* In S.'s day, and in some parts of England still, *housewife* is pronounced *husif*, which has passed into *hussy*, with a half jocular, half serious, implication of wantonness, which seems not to have been lacking three hundred years ago. Indeed, perhaps we should read here "hussies in your beds."

Iago. I am about it; but indeed my invention
Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frieze;
It plucks out brains and all: but my Muse labours,
And thus she is deliver'd.
If she be fair and wise, fairness and wit,
The one 's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Well prais'd! How if she be black and witty?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She 'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

Des. Worse and worse.

Emil. How if fair and foolish?

Iago. She never yet was foolish that was fair;
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Des. These are old fond paradoxes to make fools laugh i' th' alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou for her that 's foul and foolish?

Iago. There 's none so foul and foolish thereunto,
But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

Des. O heavy ignorance! thou praisest the worst best. But what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed, one that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?

Iago. She that was ever fair and never proud,
Had tongue at will and yet was never loud,
Never lack'd gold and yet went never gay,
Fled from her wish and yet said "Now I may,"
She that being anger'd, her revenge being nigh,
Bade her wrong stay and her displeasure fly,
She that in wisdom never was so frail
To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail,
She that could think and ne'er disclose her mind,
See suitors following and not look behind,
She was a wight, if ever such wight were, —

Des. To do what?

Iago. To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.

Des. O most lame and impotent conclusion! Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband. How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?

Cas. He speaks home, madam: you may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar.

Iago. [*Aside.*] He takes her by the palm: ay, well said, whisper: with as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve thee in thine own courtship. You say true; 't is so, indeed: if such tricks as

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[154] *To change the cod's head*, etc. = to give up the best part of a homely thing for the worst part of something very fine.
[162] *liberal* = free, in a bad sense.

these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kiss'd your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the sir in. Very good; well kiss'd! an excellent courtesy! 't is so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? would they were clyster-pipes for your sake! [*Trumpet within.*] The Moor! I know his trumpet.

Cas. 'T is truly so.
Des. Let 's meet him and receive him.
Cas. Lo, where he comes!

Enter OTHELLO *and* Attendants.

Oth. O my fair warrior!
Des. My dear Othello!
Oth. It gives me wonder great as my content
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus-high and duck again as low
As hell 's from heaven! If it were now to die,
'T were now to be most happy; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.
Des. The heavens forbid
But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow!
Oth. Amen to that, sweet powers!
I cannot speak enough of this content;
It stops me here; it is too much of joy:
And this, and this, the greatest discords be [*Kissing her.*
That e'er our hearts shall make!
Iago. [*Aside.*] O, you are well tun'd now!
But I 'll set down the pegs that make this music,
As honest as I am.
Oth. Come, let us to the castle.
News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are drown'd.
How does my old acquaintance of this isle?
Honey, you shall be well desir'd in Cyprus;
I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,
I prattle out of fashion, and I dote
In mine own comforts. I prithee, good Iago,
Go to the bay and disembark my coffers:
Bring thou the master to the citadel;
He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect. Come, Desdemona,
Once more, well met at Cyprus.
[*Exeunt Othello, Desdemona, and Attendants.*

Iago. Do thou meet me presently at the harbour. Come hither. If thou be'st valiant, — as, they say, base men being in love have then a nobility in their natures more than is native to them, — list me. The lieutenant to-night watches on the court of guard: — first, I must tell thee this — Desdemona is directly in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 't is not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be instructed. Mark me with what violence she first lov'd the Moor, but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies: and will she love him still for prating? let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have to look on the Devil? When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be, again to influence it, and to give satiety a fresh appetite, loveliness in favour, sympathy in years, manners and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in: now, for want of these requir'd conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself abus'd, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor; very nature will instruct her in it and compel her to some second choice. Now, sir, this granted, — as it is a most pregnant and unforc'd position — who stands so eminent in the degree of this fortune as Cassio does? a knave very voluble; no further conscionable than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection? why, none; why, none: a slipper and subtle knave, a finder of occasions, that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself; a devilish knave. Besides, the knave is handsome, young, and hath all those requisites in him that folly and green minds look after: a pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already. 240

Rod. I cannot believe that in her; she 's full of most bless'd condition.

Iago. Bless'd fig's-end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes: if she had been bless'd, she would never have lov'd the Moor. Bless'd pudding! Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Rod. Yes, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

Iago. Lechery, by this hand; an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips that their breaths embrac'd together. Villanous thoughts, Roderigo! when these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, th' incorporate conclusion. Pish! But, sir, be you rul'd by me: I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night; for the command, I 'll lay 't upon you. Cassio knows you not. I 'll not be far from you: do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline; or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

Rod. Well?

Iago. Sir, he is rash and very sudden in choler, and haply may strike at you: provoke him, that he may; for even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires by the means I shall then have to prefer them; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Rod. I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago. I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel: I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

Rod. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Iago. That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it;
That she loves him, 't is apt and of great credit:
The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not,
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature,
And I dare think he 'll prove to Desdemona
A most dear husband. Now, I do love her too;
Not out of absolute lust, though peradventure
I stand accountant for as great a sin,
But partly led to diet my revenge,
For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leap'd into my seat; the thought whereof
Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards;
And nothing can or shall content my soul
Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife,
Or failing so, yet that I put the Moor
At least into a jealousy so strong
That judgement cannot cure. Which thing to do,
If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash
For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,
I 'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip,
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb —
For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too —
Make the Moor thank me, love me and reward me,
For making him egregiously an ass
And practising upon his peace and quiet
Even to madness. 'T is here, but yet confus'd:
Knavery's plain face is never seen till us'd. [*Exit.*

[291] *For his quick hunting* = in order to his quick hunting; that is, to make him hunt, — not, because of his quick hunting; for Roderigo is ever ready to give up his pursuit of Desdemona. Iago has constantly to stimulate him, and now doubts that he will stand the putting on.

Scene II. *A street.*

Enter a Herald, *with a proclamation;* People *following.*

Her. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph; some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him: for, beside these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptial. So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices are open, and there is full liberty of feasting from this present hour of five till the bell have told eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus and our noble general Othello! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A hall in the castle.*

Enter Othello, Desdemona, Cassio, *and* Attendants.

Oth. Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night:
Let 's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to outsport discretion.
Cas. Iago hath direction what to do;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to 't.
Oth. Iago is most honest.
Michael, good night: to-morrow with your earliest
Let me have speech with you. [*To Desdemona.*] Come, my dear love,
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue;
That profit 's yet to come 'tween me and you.
Good night. [*Exeunt Othello, Desdemona, and Attendants.*

Enter Iago.

Cas. Welcome, Iago; we must to the watch.

Iago. Not this hour, lieutenant; 't is not yet ten o' th' clock. Our general cast us thus early for the love of his Desdemona; who let us not therefore blame: he hath not yet made wanton the night with her; and she is sport for Jove.

Cas. She 's a most exquisite lady.

Iago. And, I'll warrant her, full of game.

Cas. Indeed, she 's a most fresh and delicate creature.

Iago. What an eye she has! methinks it sounds a parley of provocation.

Cas. An inviting eye; and yet methinks right modest.

Iago. And when she speaks, is it not an alarum to love?

Cas. She is indeed perfection.

Iago. Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, lieutenant, I have a stoup of wine; and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants that would fain have a measure to the health of black Othello.

Cas. Not to-night, good Iago: I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking: I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago. O, they are our friends; but one cup: I 'll drink for you.

Cas. I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified too, and, behold, what innovation it makes here: I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago. What, man! 't is a night of revels: the gallants desire it.

Cas. Where are they?

Iago. Here at the door; I pray you, call them in.

Cas. I 'll do 't; but it dislikes me. [*Exit.*

Iago. If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
He 'll be as full of quarrel and offence
As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool Roderigo,
Whom love hath turn'd almost the wrong side out,
To Desdemona hath to-night carous'd
Potations pottle-deep; and he 's to watch:
Three lads of Cyprus, noble swelling spirits,
That hold their honours in a wary distance,
The very elements of this warlike isle,
Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of drunkards,
Am I to put our Cassio in some action
That may offend the isle. — But here they come:
If consequence do but approve my dream,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Re-enter CASSIO; *with him* MONTANO *and* Gentlemen; *Servants following with wine.*

Cas. 'Fore God, they have given me a rouse already.

Mon. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as I am a soldier.

Iago. Some wine, ho!

[*Sings.*] And let me the canakin clink, clink;
And let me the canakin clink:
A soldier 's a man;
A life 's but a span;
Why, then, let a soldier drink.

Some wine, boys!

Cas. 'Fore God, an excellent song.

Iago. I learn'd it in England, where, indeed, they are most

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59 *a rouse* = a deep drink.

potent in potting: your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander — Drink, ho! — are nothing to your English.

Cas. Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit, ere the next pottle can be filled.

Cas. To the health of our general!

Mon. I am for it, lieutenant; and I 'll do you justice.

Iago. O sweet England!

King Stephen was a worthy peer,
  His breeches cost him but a crown;
He held them sixpence all too dear,
  With that he call'd the tailor lown.

He was a wight of high renown,
  And thou art but of low degree:
'T is pride that pulls the country down;
  Then take thine auld cloak about thee.

Some wine, ho!

Cas. Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.

Iago. Will you hear 't again?

Cas. No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things. Well, God 's above all; and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

Iago. It 's true, good lieutenant.

Cas. For mine own part, — no offence to the general, nor any man of quality, — I hope to be saved.

Iago. And so do I too, lieutenant.

Cas. Ay, but, by your leave, not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let 's have no more of this; let 's to our affairs. — Forgive us our sins! — Gentlemen, let 's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk: this is my ancient; this is my right hand, and this is my left: I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Cas. Why, very well then; you must not think then that I am drunk. [*Exit.*

Mon. To the platform, masters; come, let 's set the watch.

Iago. You see this fellow that is gone before;
He is a soldier fit to stand by Cæsar
And give direction: and do but see his vice;
'T is to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as the other: 't is pity of him.
I fear the trust Othello puts him in,
On some odd time of his infirmity,
Will shake this island.

[112] *equinox:* strangely used for counterpart.

Mon. But is he often thus?
Iago. 'T is evermore the prologue to his sleep:
He 'll watch the horologe a double set,
If drink rock not his cradle.
Mon. It were well
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps he sees it not; or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils: is not this true?

Enter RODERIGO.

Iago. [*Aside to him.*] How now, Roderigo!
I pray you, after the lieutenant; go. [*Exit Roderigo.*
Mon. And 't is great pity that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place as his own second
With one of an ingraft infirmity:
It were an honest action to say
So to the Moor.
Iago. Not I, for this fair island:
I do love Cassio well; and would do much
To cure him of this evil — But, hark! what noise?
[*Cry within:* "Help! help!"

Re-enter CASSIO, *driving in* RODERIGO.

Cas. You rogue! you rascal!
Mon. What 's the matter, lieutenant?
Cas. A knave teach me my duty!
I 'll beat the knave into a twiggen bottle.
Rod. Beat me!
Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue? [*Striking Roderigo.*
Mon. Nay, good lieutenant;
[*Staying him.*
I pray you, sir, hold your hand.
Cas. Let me go, sir,
Or I 'll knock you o'er the mazzard.
Mon. Come, come, you 're drunk.
Cas. Drunk! [*They fight.*
Iago [*Aside to Roderigo.*] Away, I say; go out, and cry a mutiny. [*Exit Roderigo.*
Nay, good lieutenant, — alas, gentlemen; —
Help, ho! — Lieutenant, — sir, — Montano, — sir; —
Help, masters! — Here 's a goodly watch indeed! [*Bell rings.*
Who 's that which rings the bell? — Diablo, ho!
The town will rise: God's will, lieutenant, hold!
You will be sham'd for ever.

Re-enter OTHELLO *and* Attendants.

Oth. What is the matter here?

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135 *twiggen bottle* = a bottle covered with twigs, like a demijohn.

Mon. 'Zounds, I bleed still; I am hurt to th' death. [*Faints.*
Oth. Hold, for your lives!
Iago. Hold, ho! Lieutenant, — sir, — Montano, — gentlemen, —
Have you forgot all sense of place and duty?
Hold! the general speaks to you; hold, hold, for shame!
Oth. Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth this?
Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that
Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?
For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl:
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage
Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion.
Silence that dreadful bell: it frights the isle
From her propriety. What is the matter, masters?
Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.
Iago. I do not know: friends all but now, even now,
In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom
Devesting them for bed; and then, but now —
As if some planet had unwitted men —
Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast,
In opposition bloody. I cannot speak
Any beginning to this peevish odds;
And would in action glorious I had lost
Those legs that brought me to a part of it!
Oth. How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?
Cas. I pray you, pardon me; I cannot speak.
Oth. Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil;
The gravity and stillness of your youth
The world hath noted, and your name is great
In mouths of wisest censure: what 's the matter,
That you unlace your reputation thus,
And spend your rich opinion for the name
Of a night-brawler? give me answer to it.
Mon. Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger:
Your officer, Iago, can inform you, —
While I spare speech, which something now offends me, —
Of all that I do know: nor know I aught
By me that 's said or done amiss this night;
Unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,
And to defend ourselves it be a sin
When violence assails us.
Oth. Now, by heaven,
My blood begins my safer guides to rule;
And passion, having my best judgement collied,

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189 *collied* = obscured, as a collier's face is with grime.

Assays to lead the way: if I once stir,
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on;
And he that is approv'd in this offence,
Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
Shall lose me. What! in a town of war,
Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,
To manage private and domestic quarrel,
In night, and on the court and guard of safety!
'T is monstrous. Iago, who began 't?
Mon. If partially affin'd, or leagu'd in office,
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.
Iago. Touch me not so near:
I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio;
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
Shall nothing wrong him. Thus it is, general.
Montano and myself being in speech,
There comes a fellow crying out for help;
And Cassio following him with determin'd sword,
To execute upon him. Sir, this gentleman
Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause:
Myself the crying fellow did pursue,
Lest by his clamour — as it so fell out —
The town might fall in fright: he, swift of foot,
Outran my purpose; and I return'd the rather
For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,
And Cassio high in oath; which till to-night
I ne'er might say before. When I came back —
For this was brief — I found them close together,
At blow and thrust; even as again they were
When you yourself did part them.
More of this matter cannot I report:
But men are men; the best sometimes forget:
Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,
As men in rage strike those that wish them best,
Yet surely Cassio, I believe, receiv'd
From him that fled some strange indignity,
Which patience could not pass.
Oth. I know, Iago,
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
Making it light to Cassio. Cassio, I love thee;
But never more be officer of mine.

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201 *partially affin'd* = made partial by companionship. Montano thinks that honest Iago may smooth over matters for his fellow officer, Cassio.

Re-enter DESDEMONA, *attended.*

Look, if my gentle love be not rais'd up!
I 'll make thee an example.
  Des. What 's the matter?
  Oth. All 's well now, sweeting; come away to bed.
Sir, for your hurts, myself will be your surgeon:
Lead him off. [*To Montano, who is led off.*
Iago, look with care about the town,
And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.
Come, Desdemona: 't is the soldiers' life
To have their balmy slumbers wak'd with strife.
[*Exeunt all but Iago and Cassio.*

Iago. What, are you hurt, lieutenant?

Cas. Ay, past all surgery.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!

Cas. Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial. My reputation, Iago, my reputation!

Iago. As I am an honest man, I thought you had received some bodily wound; there is more sense in that than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false imposition: oft got without merit, and lost without deserving: you have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover the general again: you are but now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog to affright an imperious lion: sue to him again, and he 's yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despis'd than to deceive so good a commander with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow? O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

Iago. What was he that you follow'd with your sword? What had he done to you?

Cas. I know not.

Iago. Is 't possible?

Cas. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, pleasance, revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Iago. Why, but you are now well enough: how came you thus recovered?

Cas. It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil wrath: one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago. Come, you are too severe a moraler: as the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

Cas. I will ask him for my place again; he shall tell me I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange! Every inordinate cup is unbless'd and the ingredient is a devil.

Iago. Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well us'd: exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think you think I love you.

Cas. I have well approved it, sir. I drunk!

Iago. You or any man living may be drunk at some time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general: I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces: confess yourself freely to her; importune her help to put you in your place again: she is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested; this broken joint between you and her husband entreat her to splinter; and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

Cas. You advise me well.

Iago. I protest, in the sincerity of love and honest kindness.

Cas. I think it freely; and betimes in the morning I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me: I am desperate of my fortunes if they check me here.

Iago. You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant; I must to the watch.

Cas. Good night, honest Iago. [*Exit.*

Iago. And what 's he then that says I play the villain?
When this advice is free I give and honest,
Probal to thinking and indeed the course
To win the Moor again? For 't is most easy
The inclining Desdemona to subdue
In any honest suit: she 's fram'd as fruitful
As the free elements. And then for her
To win the Moor — were 't to renounce his baptism,
All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,
His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,

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312 *Probal*=reasonable, that may be proved; or a shortened form of "probable." A word unknown elsewhere; but what cared S. for that!

Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function. How am I then a villain
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,
Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!
When devils will the blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now: for whiles this honest fool
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
I 'll pour this pestilence into his ear,
That she repeals him for her body's lust;
And by how much she strives to do him good,
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
So will I turn her virtue into pitch,
And out of her own goodness make the net
That shall enmesh them all.

Re-enter Roderigo.

How now, Roderigo!

Rod. I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent; I have been to-night exceedingly well cudgell'd; and I think the issue will be, I shall have so much experience for my pains, and so, with no money at all and a little more wit, return again to Venice.

Iago. How poor are they that have not patience!
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?
Thou know'st we work by wit, and not by witchcraft;
And wit depends on dilatory time.
Does 't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
And thou, by that small hurt, hast cashier'd Cassio:
Though other things grow fair against the sun,
Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe:
Content thyself awhile. By the mass, 't is morning;
Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.
Retire thee; go where thou art billeted:
Away, I say; thou shalt know more hereafter:
Nay, get thee gone. [*Exit Roderigo.*] Two things are to be done:
My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress;
I 'll set her on;
Myself the while to draw the Moor apart,
And bring him jump when he may Cassio find
Soliciting his wife: ay, that 's the way:
Dull not device by coldness and delay. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Before the castle.*

Enter CASSIO *and some* Musicians.

Cas. Masters, play here; I will content your pains;
Something that 's brief; and bid "Good morrow, general."
[*Music.*

Enter Clown.

Clo. Why, masters, have your instruments been in Naples, that they speak i' th' nose thus?

First Mus. How, sir, how!

Clo. Are these, I pray you, wind-instruments?

First Mus. Ay, marry, are they, sir.

Clo. O, thereby hangs a tail.

First Mus. Whereby hangs a tale, sir?

Clo. Marry, sir, by many a wind-instrument that I know. But, masters, here 's money for you: and the general so likes your music, that he desires you, for love's sake, to make no more noise with it.

First Mus. Well, sir, we will not.

Clo. If you have any music that may not be heard, to 't again: but, as they say, to hear music the general does not greatly care.

First Mus. We have none such, sir.

Clo. Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I 'll away: go; vanish into air; away! [*Exeunt Musicians.*

Cas. Dost thou hear, mine honest friend?

Clo. No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

Cas. Prithee, keep up thy quillets. There 's a poor piece of gold for thee: if the gentlewoman that attends the general's wife be stirring, tell her there 's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech: wilt thou do this?

Clo. She is stirring, sir: if she will stir hither,
I shall seem to notify unto her.

Cas. Do, good my friend. [*Exit Clown.*

Enter IAGO.

In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed, then?

Cas. Why, no; the day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in to your wife: my suit to her
Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

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[16] *the general does not greatly care.* Here we have a punning allusion to the indifference of the general public to music.

Iago. I 'll send her to you presently;
And I 'll devise a mean to draw the Moor
Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free.
Cas. I humbly thank you for 't. [*Exit Iago.*] I never knew
A Florentine more kind and honest.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. Good morrow, good lieutenant: I am sorry
For your displeasure; but all will sure be well.
The general and his wife are talking of it;
And she speaks for you stoutly: the Moor replies,
That he you hurt is of great fame in Cyprus
And great affinity, and that in wholesome wisdom
He might not but refuse you; but he protests he loves you,
And needs no other suitor but his likings
To take the saf'st occasion by the front
To bring you in again.
Cas. Yet, I beseech you,
If you think fit, or that it may be done,
Give me advantage of some brief discourse
With Desdemona alone.
Emil. Pray you, come in:
I will bestow you where you shall have time
To speak your bosom freely.
Cas. I am much bound to you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room in the castle.*

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, *and* Gentlemen.

Oth. These letters give, Iago, to the pilot;
And by him do my duties to the senate:
That done, I will be walking on the works;
Repair there to me.
Iago. Well, my good lord, I 'll do 't.
Oth. This fortification, gentlemen, shall we see 't?
Gent. We 'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt*

SCENE III. *The garden of the castle.*

Enter DESDEMONA, CASSIO, *and* EMILIA.

Des. Be thou assur'd, good Cassio, I will do
All my abilities in thy behalf.
Emil. Good madam, do: I warrant it grieves my husband,
As if the case were his.

42 *your displeasure* = that which displeases, annoys, you.

Des. O, that 's an honest fellow. Do not doubt, Cassio,
But I will have my lord and you again
As friendly as you were.
Cas. Bounteous madam,
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,
He 's never any thing but your true servant.
Des. I know 't; I thank you. You do love my lord:
You have known him long; and be you well assur'd
He shall in strangeness stand no further off
Than in a politic distance.
Cas. Ay, but, lady,
That policy may either last so long,
Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
Or breed itself so out of circumstance,
That, I being absent and my place supplied,
My general will forget my love and service.
Des. Do not doubt that; before Emilia here
I give thee warrant of thy place: assure thee,
If I do vow a friendship, I 'll perform it
To the last article: my lord shall never rest;
I 'll watch him tame, and talk him out of patience;
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
I 'll intermingle every thing he does
With Cassio's suit: therefore be merry, Cassio;
For thy solicitor shall rather die
Than give thy cause away.
Emil. Madam, here comes my lord.
Cas. Madam, I 'll take my leave.
Des. Why, stay, and hear me speak.
Cas. Madam, not now: I am very ill at ease,
Unfit for mine own purposes.
Des. Well, do your discretion. [*Exit Cassio.*

Enter OTHELLO *and* IAGO.

Iago. Ha! I like not that.
Oth. What dost thou say?
Iago. Nothing, my lord: or if — I know not what.
Oth. Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?
Iago. Cassio, my lord! No, sure, I cannot think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing you coming.
Oth. I do believe 't was he.
Des. How now, my lord!
I have been talking with a suitor here,
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

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[19] *Do not doubt that* = Do not imagine, fear, that.
[23] *watch him tame.* Hawks were tamed by being kept sleepless by watchers.

Oth. Who is 't you mean?
Des. Why, your lieutenant, Cassio. Good my lord,
If I have any grace or power to move you,
His present reconciliation take;
For if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,
I have no judgement in an honest face:
I prithee, call him back.
Oth. Went he hence now?
Des. Ay, sooth; so humbled
That he hath left part of his grief with me,
To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.
Oth. Not now, sweet Desdemona; some other time.
Des. But shall 't be shortly?
Oth. The sooner, sweet, for you.
Des. Shall 't be to-night at supper?
Oth. No, not to-night.
Des. To-morrow dinner, then?
Oth. I shall not dine at home;
I meet the captains at the citadel.
Des. Why, then, to-morrow night; or Tuesday morn;
On Tuesday noon, or night; on Wednesday morn:
I prithee, name the time, but let it not
Exceed three days. In faith, he 's penitent;
And yet his trespass, in our common reason —
Save that, they say, the wars must make examples
Out of their best — is not almost a fault
To incur a private check. When shall he come?
Tell me, Othello: I wonder in my soul,
What you would ask me, that I should deny,
Or stand so mammering on. What! Michael Cassio,
That came a-wooing with you, and so many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,
Hath ta'en your part; to have so much to do
To bring him in! Trust me, I could do much, —
Oth. Prithee, no more: let him come when he will;
I will deny thee nothing.
Des. Why, this is not a boon;
'T is as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm,
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit
To your own person: nay, when I have a suit
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poise and difficult weight
And fearful to be granted.
Oth. I will deny thee nothing:

Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,
To leave me but a little to myself.
Des. Shall I deny you? no: farewell, my lord.
Oth. Farewell, my Desdemona: I 'll come to thee straight.
Des. Emilia, come. Be as your fancies teach you;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient. [*Exeunt Desdemona and Emilia.*
Oth. Excellent wench! Perdition catch my soul,
But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again.
Iago. My noble lord, —
Oth. What dost thou say, Iago?
Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?
Oth. He did, from first to last: why dost thou ask?
Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought;
No further harm.
Oth. Why of thy thought, Iago?
Iago. I did not think he had been acquainted with her.
Oth. O, yes; and went between us very oft.
Iago. Indeed!
Oth. Indeed! ay, indeed: discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?
Iago. Honest, my lord!
Oth. Honest! ay, honest.
Iago. My lord, for aught I know.
Oth. What dost thou think?
Iago. Think, my lord!
Oth. Think, my lord!
By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something:
I heard thee say even now, thou lik'dst not that,
When Cassio left my wife: what didst not like?
And when I told thee he was of my counsel
In my whole course of wooing, thou criedst "Indeed!"
And didst contract and purse thy brow together,
As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain
Some horrible conceit: if thou dost love me,
Show me thy thought.
Iago. My lord, you know I love you.
Oth. I think thou dost;

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[90] *Excellent wench:* the folio, "Excellent *wretch.*" It is needless to point out that "wretch" may be used as a term of fondest endearment; but not in connection with "excellent." The misprint was easy.

[99] *acquainted with it:* the old copies "with her." But Cassio's acquaintance or non-acquaintance with Desdemona had no necessary connection with his knowledge of Othello's love.

And, for I know thou 'rt full of love and honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them breath,
Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more:
For such things in a false disloyal knave
Are tricks of custom; but in a man that 's just
They are close delations, working from the heart
That passion cannot rule.
Iago. For Michael Cassio,
I dare be sworn, I think, that he is honest.
Oth. I think so too.
Iago. Men should be what they seem;
Or those that be not, would they might seem none!
Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.
Iago. Why, then, I think Cassio 's an honest man.
Oth. Nay, yet there 's more in this:
I prithee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,
As thou dost ruminate, and give thy worst of thoughts
The worst of words.
Iago. Good my lord, pardon me:
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts? Why, say they are vile and false;
As where 's that palace whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not? who has a breast so pure,
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets and law-days and in session sit
With meditations lawful?
Oth. Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd and mak'st his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.
Iago. I do beseech you —
Though I perchance am vicious in my guess,
As, I confess, it is my nature's plague
To spy into abuses, and oft my jealousy
Shapes faults that are not — that your wisdom yet,
From one that so imperfectly conceits,
Would take no notice, nor build yourself a trouble
Out of his scattering and unsure observance.
It were not for your quiet nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
To let you know my thoughts.
Oth. What dost thou mean?
Iago. Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:

123 *delations* = revelations.
140 *leets* = appointed times for holding court.

Who steals my purse steals trash; 't is something, nothing;
'T was mine, 't is his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed.
Oth. By heaven, I 'll know thy thoughts.
Iago. You cannot, if my heart were in your hand;
Nor shall not, whilst 't is in my custody.
Oth. Ha!
Iago. O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is the green-eyed monster which doth make
The meat it feeds on: that cuckold lives in bliss
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!
Oth. O misery!
Iago. Poor and content is rich and rich enough,
But riches fineless is as poor as winter
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.
Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
From jealousy!
Oth. Why, why is this?
Think'st thou I 'ld make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions? No; to be once in doubt
Is once to be resolv'd: exchange me for a goat,
When I shall turn the business of my soul
To such exsufflicate and blown surmises,
Matching thy inference. 'T is not to make me jealous
To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well;
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous:
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt;
For she had eyes, and chose me. No, Iago;
I 'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove;
And on the proof, there is no more but this, —
Away at once with love or jealousy!
Iago. I am glad of it; for now I shall have reason
To show the love and duty that I bear you
With franker spirit: therefore, as I am bound,
Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof.

[166] *which doth make*, etc. The old copies have "doth *mock*;" but the correction in the text (Theobald's) is the surest ever made in S. Without it the passage is naught.

[173] *riches fineless* = riches without end.

[182] *exsufflicate* = puffed out, thin and bubble-like, or, spat upon, according to its derivation, as to which, and as to his own exact meaning, I think that S. himself was not clear.

Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio;
Wear your eye thus, not jealous nor secure:
I would not have your free and noble nature,
Out of self-bounty, be abus'd; look to 't:
I know our country disposition well;
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
Is not to leave 't undone, but keep 't unknown.
Oth. Dost thou say so?
Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you;
And when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks,
She lov'd them most.
Oth. And so she did.
Iago. Why, go to then;
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
To seel her father's eyes up close as oak —
He thought 't was witchcraft — but I am much to blame:
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon
For too much loving you.
Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.
Iago. I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.
Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.
Iago. I' faith, I fear it has.
I hope you will consider what is spoke
Comes from my love. But I do see y' are mov'd:
I am to pray you not to strain my speech
To grosser issues nor to larger reach
Than to suspicion.
Oth. I will not.
Iago. Should you do so, my lord,
My speech should fall into such vile success
As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio 's my worthy friend —
My lord, I see you 're mov'd.
Oth. No, not much mov'd:
I do not think but Desdemona 's honest.
Iago. Long live she so! and long live you to think so!
Oth. And yet, how nature erring from itself, —
Iago. Ay, there 's the point: as — to be bold with you —
Not to affect many proposed matches
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
Whereto we see in all things nature tends —
Foh! one may smell in such a will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.
But pardon me; I do not in position
Distinctly speak of her; though I may fear

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210 *seel* = blind; a falconer's phrase.

Her will, recoiling to her better judgement,
May fail to catch you with her country forms
And happily repent.
Oth. Farewell, farewell:
If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;
Set on thy wife to observe: leave me, Iago.
Iago. [*Going.*] My lord, I take my leave.
Oth. Why did I marry? This honest creature doubtless
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.
Iago. [*Returning.*] My lord, I would I might entreat your honour
To scan this thing no further; leave it to time:
Although 't is fit that Cassio have his place,
For, sure, he fills it up with great ability,
Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
You shall by that perceive him and his means:
Note if your lady strain his entertainment
With any strong or vehement importunity;
Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears —
As worthy cause I have to fear I am —
And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.
Oth. Fear not my government.
Iago. I once more take my leave. [*Exit.*
Oth. This fellow 's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities, with a learn'd spirit,
Of human dealings. If I do prove her haggard,
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
I 'ld whistle her off and let her down the wind,
To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have, or for I am declin'd
Into the vale of years, — yet that 's not much —
She 's gone. I am abus'd; and my relief
Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses. Yet, 't is the plague of great ones;
Prerogativ'd are they less than the base;
'T is destiny unshunnable, like death:
Even then this forked plague is fated to us
When we do quicken. Desdemona comes:

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276 *forked plague:* the ever-recurring allusion to the horns of the deceived husband.
277 *when we do quicken* = when we come to life, are born.

Re-enter DESDEMONA *and* EMILIA.

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!
I 'll not believe 't.
Des. How now, my dear Othello!
Your dinner, and the generous islanders
By you invited, do attend your presence.
Oth. I am to blame.
Des. Why do you speak so faintly?
Are you not well?
Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead here.
Des. 'Faith, that 's with watching; 't will away again:
Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
It will be well.
Oth. Your napkin is too little:
[*He puts the handkerchief from him; and it drops.*
Let it alone. Come, I 'll go in with you.
Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.
[*Exeunt Othello and Desdemona.*
Emil. I am glad I have found this napkin:
This was her first remembrance from the Moor:
My wayward husband hath a hundred times
Woo'd me to steal it; but she so loves the token,
For he conjur'd her she should ever keep it,
That she reserves it evermore about her
To kiss and talk to. I 'll have the work ta'en out,
And give 't Iago; what he will do with it
Heaven knows, not I;
I nothing but to please his fantasy.

Re-enter IAGO.

Iago. How now! what do you here alone?
Emil. Do not you chide; I have a thing for you.
Iago. A thing for me? it is a common thing—
Emil. Ha!
Iago. To have a foolish wife.
Emil. O, is that all? What will you give me now
For that same handkerchief?
Iago. What handkerchief?
Emil. What handkerchief!
Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona;
That which so often you did bid me steal.
Iago. Hast stol'n it from her?
Emil. No, 'faith; she let it drop by negligence,
And, to the advantage, I, being here, took 't up.
Look, here it is.
Iago. A good wench; give it me.

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296 *ta'en out* = copied.

Emil. What will you do with 't, that you have been so earnest
To have me filch it?
Iago. [*Snatching it.*] Why, what 's that to you?
Emil. If it be not for some purpose of import,
Give 't me again: poor lady, she 'll run mad
When she shall lack it.
Iago. Be not acknown on 't; I have use for it.
Go, leave me. [*Exit Emilia.*
I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it. Trifles light as air
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ: this may do something.
The Moor already changes with my poison:
Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,
Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,
But with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur. I did say so:
Look, where he comes!

Re-enter OTHELLO.

Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst yesterday.
Oth. Ha! ha! false to me?
Iago. Why, how now, general! no more of that.
Oth. Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the rack:
I swear 't is better to be much abus'd
Than but to know 't a little.
Iago. How now, my lord!
Oth. What sense had I of her stol'n hours of lust?
I saw 't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me:
I slept the next night well, was free and merry;
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips:
He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stol'n,
Let him not know 't, and he 's not robb'd at all.
Iago. I am sorry to hear this.
Oth. I had been happy, if the general camp,
Pioners and all, had tasted her sweet body,
So I had nothing known. O, now, for ever
Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!
Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars,
That make ambition virtue! O, farewell!
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,

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319 *acknown* = privy, informed.
333 *ow'dst* = hadst.

The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war!
And, O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
Farewell! Othello's occupation 's gone!
Iago. Is 't possible, my lord?
Oth. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore,
Be sure of it; give me the ocular proof;
Or, by the worth of man's eternal soul,
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog
Than answer my wak'd wrath!
Iago. Is 't come to this?
Oth. Make me to see 't; or, at the least, so prove it,
That the probation bear no hinge nor loop
To hang a doubt on; or woe upon thy life!
Iago. My noble lord, —
Oth. If thou dost slander her and torture me,
Never pray more; abandon all remorse;
On horror's head horrors accumulate;
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed;
For nothing canst thou to damnation add
Greater than that.
Iago. O grace! O heaven forgive me!
Are you a man? have you a soul or sense?
God b' wi' you; take mine office. O wretched fool,
That lov'st to make thine honesty a vice!
O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O world,
To be direct and honest is not safe.
I thank you for this profit; and from hence
I 'll love no friend, sith love breeds such offence.
Oth. Nay, stay: thou shouldst be honest.
Iago. I should be wise, for honesty 's a fool
And loses that it works for.
Oth. By the world,
I think my wife be honest and think she is not;
I think that thou art just and think thou art not.
I 'll have some proof. Her name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrim'd and black
As mine own face. If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I 'll not endure it. Would I were satisfied!
Iago. I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion:
I do repent me that I put it to you.
You would be satisfied?
Oth. Would! nay, I will.

Iago. And may: but, how? how satisfied, my lord?
Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on —
Behold her topp'd?
Oth. Death and damnation! O!
Iago. It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
To bring them to that prospect: damn them then,
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster
More than their own! What then? how then?
What shall I say? Where 's satisfaction?
It is impossible you should see this,
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,
If imputation and strong circumstances,
Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction, you may have 't.
Oth. Give me a living reason she 's disloyal.
Iago. I do not like the office:
But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,
Prick'd to 't by foolish honesty and love,
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately;
And, being troubled with a raging tooth,
I could not sleep.
There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs:
One of this kind is Cassio:
In sleep I heard him say "Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves;"
And then, sir, would he gripe and wring my hand,
Cry "O sweet creature!" and then kiss me hard,
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots
That grew upon my lips: then laid his leg
Over my thigh, and sigh'd, and kiss'd; and then
Cried "Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor!"
Oth. O monstrous! monstrous!
Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.
Oth. But this denoted a foregone conclusion:
'T is a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.
Iago. And this may help to thicken other proofs
That do demonstrate thinly.
Oth. I 'll tear her all to pieces.
Iago. Nay, but be wise: yet we see nothing done;
She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief
Spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?
Oth. I gave her such a one; 't was my first gift.

Iago. I know not that: but such a handkerchief —
I am sure it was your wife's — did I to-day
See Cassio wipe his beard with.
Oth. If it be that, —
Iago. If it be that, or any that was hers,
It speaks against her with the other proofs.
Oth. O, that the slave had forty thousand lives!
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
Now do I see 't is true. Look here, Iago;
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.
'T is gone.
Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell!
Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne
To tyrannous hate! Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,
For 't is of aspics' tongues!
Iago. Yet be content.
Oth. O, blood, blood, blood!
Iago. Patience, I say; your mind perhaps may change.
Oth. Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontic and the Hellespont,
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up. Now, by yond marble heaven,
[*Kneels*] In the due reverence of a sacred vow
I here engage my words.
Iago. Do not rise yet.
[*Kneels.*] Witness, you ever-burning lights above,
You elements that clip us round about,
Witness that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service! Let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,
What bloody business ever. [*They rise.*
Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to 't:
Within these three days let me hear thee say
That Cassio's not alive.
Iago. My friend is dead; 't is done at your request:
But let her live.
Oth. Damn her, lewd minx! O, damn her!

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[464] *clip* = embrace, encircle.

[468] *remorse:* a doubtful reading, or else a very forced use of the word in the sense of pity, for Othello.

Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.
Iago. I am your own for ever. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Before the castle.*

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, *and* Clown.

Des. Do you know, sirrah, where Lieutenant Cassio lies?

Clo. I dare not say he lies any where.

Des. Why, man?

Clo. He 's a soldier, and for one to say a soldier lies, is stabbing.

Des. Go to: where lodges he?

Clo. To tell you where he lodges, is to tell you where I lie.

Des. Can any thing be made of this?

Clo. I know not where he lodges, and for me to devise a lodging and say he lies here or he lies there, were to lie in mine own throat.

Des. Can you inquire him out, and be edified by report?

Clo. I will catechize the world for him; that is, make questions, and by them answer.

Des. Seek him, bid him come hither: tell him I have mov'd my lord on his behalf, and hope all will be well.

Clo. To do this is within the compass of man's wit; and therefore I will attempt the doing it. [*Exit.*

Des. Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia?
Emil. I know not, madam.
Des. Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse
Full of crusadoes: and, but my noble Moor
Is true of mind and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill thinking.
Emil. Is he not jealous?
Des. Who, he? I think the sun where he was born
Drew all such humours from him.
Emil. Look, where he comes.
Des. I will not leave him now till Cassio
Be call'd to him.

Enter OTHELLO.

How is 't with you, my lord?
Oth. Well, my good lady. [*Aside.*] O, hardness to dissemble!—
How do you, Desdemona?

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[22] *crusadoes.* Portuguese gold coins, having a cross stamped on them; current in England in S.'s time.

Des. Well, my good lord.
Oth. Give me your hand: this hand is moist, my lady.
Des. It yet hath felt no age nor known no sorrow.
Oth. This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart:
Hot, hot, and moist: this hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here 's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'T is a good hand,
A frank one.
Des. You may, indeed, say so;
For 't was that hand that gave away my heart.
Oth. A liberal hand: the hearts of old gave hands;
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.
Des. I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.
Oth. What promise, chuck?
Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.
Oth. I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me;
Lend me thy handkerchief.
Des. Here, my lord.
Oth. That which I gave you.
Des. I have it not about me.
Oth. Not?
Des. No, indeed, my lord.
Oth. That is a fault.
That handkerchief
Did an Egyptian to my mother give;
She was a charmer, and could almost read
The thoughts of people: she told her, while she kept it,
'T would make her amiable and subdue my father
Entirely to her love, but if she lost it,
Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
Should hold her loathed and his spirits should hunt
After new fancies: she, dying, gave it me;
And bid me, when my fate would have me wiv'd,
To give it her. I did so: and take heed on 't;
Make it a darling like your precious eye;
To lose 't or give 't away were such perdition
As nothing else could match.
Des. Is 't possible?
Oth. 'T is true: there 's magic in the web of it.
A sibyl, that had number'd in the world

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[43] *But our new heraldry is hands*, etc. The order of baronetcy was instituted by James I. in 1611, for the purpose of subduing Ulster. On payment of £1000 for this purpose the payer was made a baronet, and there was added to his arms, on an escutcheon of pretence, the arms of Ulster, a red hand. This seems to be the new heraldry Othello speaks of; but in that case the passage was probably added after the first production of the play.

The sun to course two hundred compasses,
In her prophetic fury sew'd the work;
The worms were hallow'd that did breed the silk;
And it was dyed in mummy which the skilful
Conserved of maidens' hearts.
Des. Indeed! is 't true?
Oth. Most veritable; therefore look to 't well.
Des. Then would to God that I had never seen 't!
Oth. Ha! wherefore?
Des. Why do you speak so startingly and rash?
Oth. Is 't lost? is 't gone? speak, is it out o' th' way?
Des. Heaven bless us!
Oth. Say you?
Des. It is not lost; but what an if it were?
Oth. How!
Des. I say, it is not lost.
Oth. Fetch 't, let me see 't.
Des. Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now.
This is a trick to put me from my suit:
Pray you, let Cassio be receiv'd again.
Oth. Fetch me the handkerchief: my mind misgives.
Des. Come, come;
You 'll never meet a more sufficient man.
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. I pray, talk we of Cassio.
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. A man that all his time
Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,
Shar'd dangers with you, —
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. In sooth, you are to blame.
Oth. Away! [*Exit.*
Emil. Is not this man jealous?
Des. I ne'er saw this before.
Sure, there 's some wonder in this handkerchief:
I am most unhappy in the loss of it.
Emil. 'T is not a year or two shows us a man:
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;
They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,
They belch us. Look you, Cassio and my husband!

Enter Cassio *and* Iago.

Iago. There is no other way; 't is she must do 't:
And, lo, the happiness! go, and importune her.

---

100 *They are all but stomachs.* Emilia means, They are nought but stomachs, and we nought but food. The obscurity results from an inversion of, They are but all stomach and we but all food.

Des. How now, good Cassio! what 's the news with you?
Cas. Madam, my former suit: I do beseech you
That by your virtuous means I may again
Exist, and be a member of his love
Whom I with all the office of my heart
Entirely honour: I would not be delay'd.
If my offence be of such mortal kind
That nor my service past, nor present sorrows,
Nor purpos'd merit in futurity,
Can ransom me into his love again,
But to know so must be my benefit;
So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content,
And shut myself up in some other course,
To fortune's alms.
Des. Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio!
My advocation is not now in tune;
My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him,
Were he in favour as in humour alter'd.
So help me every spirit sanctified,
As I have spoken for you all my best
And stood within the blank of his displeasure
For my free speech! you must awhile be patient:
What I can do I will; and more I will
Than for myself I dare: let that suffice you.
Iago. Is my lord angry?
Emil. He went hence but now,
And certainly in strange unquietness.
Iago. Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,
When it hath blown his ranks into the air,
And, like the devil, from his very arm
Puff'd his own brother: — and can he be angry?
Something of moment then: I will go meet him:
There 's matter in 't indeed, if he be angry.
Des. I prithee, do so. [*Exit Iago.*
Something, sure, of state,
Either from Venice, or some unhatch'd practice
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,
Hath puddled his clear spirit; and in such cases
Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
Though great ones are their object. 'T is even so;
For let our finger ache, and it indues
Our other healthful members even to that sense
Of pain: nay, we must think men are not gods,
Nor of them look for such observances
As fit the bridal. Beshrew me much, Emilia,

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137 *unhatch'd practice* = undeveloped plot.

I was, unhandsome warrior as I am,
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
But now I find I had suborn'd the witness,
And he 's indicted falsely.
Emil. Pray heaven it be state-matters, as you think,
And no conception nor no jealous toy
Concerning you.
Des. Alas the day! I never gave him cause.
Emil. But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;
They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous for they are jealous: 't is a monster
Begot upon itself, born on itself.
Des. Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind!
Emil. Lady, amen.
Des. I will go seek him. Cassio, walk hereabout:
If I do find him fit, I 'll move your suit
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.
Cas. I humbly thank your ladyship. [*Exeunt Desdemona and Emilia.*

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. Save you, friend Cassio!
Cas. What make you from home?
How is it with you, my most fair Bianca?
I' faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.
Bian. And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.
What, keep a week away? seven days and nights?
Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours,
More tedious than the dial eight score times?
O weary reckoning!
Cas. Pardon me, Bianca:
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd;
But I shall, in a more continuate time,
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
[*Giving her Desdemona's handkerchief*
Take me this work out.
Bian. O Cassio, whence came this?
This is some token from a newer friend:
To the felt absence now I feel a cause:
Is 't come to this? Well, well.
Cas. Go to, woman!
Throw your vile guesses in the Devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous now
That this is from some mistress, some remembrance:
No, in good troth, Bianca.

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[152] *jealous.* It is worth while to remark that this word was pronounced *jelyus* in S.'s time. It is almost invariably spelled *jealious*, as here five times within five lines.

[176] *Take me this work out* = Copy it for me.

Bian. Why, whose is it?
Cas. I know not, sweet: I found it in my chamber.
I like the work well: ere it be demanded —
As like enough it will — I 'ld have it copied:
Take it, and do 't; and leave me for this time.
Bian. Leave you! wherefore?
Cas. I do attend here on the general;
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me woman'd.
Bian. Why, I pray you?
Cas. Not that I love you not.
Bian. But that you do not love me.
I pray you, bring me on the way a little,
And say if I shall see you soon at night.
Cas. 'T is but a little way that I can bring you;
For I attend here: but I 'll see you soon.
Bian. 'T is very good; I must be circumstanc'd. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I. *Cyprus. Before the castle.*

Enter Othello *and* Iago.

Iago. Will you think so?
Oth. Think so, Iago!
Iago. What,
To kiss in private?
Oth. An unauthoriz'd kiss.
Iago. Or to be naked with her friend in bed
An hour or more, not meaning any harm?
Oth. Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm!
It is hypocrisy against the Devil:
They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,
The Devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.
Iago. So they do nothing, 't is a venial slip:
But if I give my wife a handkerchief, —
Oth. What then?
Iago. Why, then, 't is hers, my lord; and, being hers,
She may, I think, bestow 't on any man.
Oth. She is protectress of her honour too:
May she give that?
Iago. Her honour is an essence that 's not seen;
They have it very oft that have it not:
But, for the handkerchief, —

[197] *circumstanc'd:* loosely used to mean contented with what happens.

Oth. By heaven, I would most gladly have forgot it.
Thou said'st — O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all — he had my handkerchief.
Iago. Ay, what of that?
Oth. That 's not so good now.
Iago. What,
If I had said I had seen him do you wrong?
Or heard him say, — as knaves be such abroad,
Who having, by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced or suppli'd them, cannot choose
But they must blab —
Oth. Hath he said any thing?
Iago. He hath, my lord; but be you well assur'd,
No more than he 'll unswear.
Oth. What hath he said?
Iago. 'Faith, that he did — I know not what he did.
Oth. What? what?
Iago. Lie —
Oth. With her?
Iago. With her, on her; what you will.

Oth. Lie with her! lie on her! We say lie on her, when they belie her. Lie with her! that 's fulsome. — Handkerchief — confessions — handkerchief! — To confess, and be hang'd for his labour; — first, to be hang'd, and then to confess. — I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction. It is not words that shake me thus. Pish! Noses, ears, and lips. — Is 't possible? — Confess — handkerchief! — O devil! [*Falls in a trance.*

Iago. Work on,
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught;
And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,
All guiltless, meet reproach. — What, ho! my lord!
My lord, I say! Othello!

Enter CASSIO.

How now, Cassio!
Cas. What 's the matter?
Iago. My lord is fall'n into an epilepsy:
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.
Cas. Rub him about the temples.
Iago. No, forbear;
The lethargy must have his quiet course:
If not, he foams at mouth and by and by
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs:
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,

He will recover straight: when he is gone,
I would on great occasion speak with you. [*Exit Cassio.*
How is it, general? have you not hurt your head?
Oth. Dost thou mock me?
Iago. I mock you! no, by heaven.
Would you would bear your fortune like a man!
Oth. A horned man 's a monster and a beast.
Iago. There 's many a beast then in a populous city,
And many a civil monster.
Oth. Did he confess it?
Iago. Good sir, be a man;
Think every bearded fellow that 's but yok'd
May draw with you: there 's millions now alive
That nightly lie in those unproper beds
Which they dare swear peculiar: your case is better.
O, 't is the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,
To lip a wanton in a secure couch,
And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;
And knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.
Oth. O, thou art wise; 't is certain.
Iago. Stand you awhile apart;
Confine yourself but in a patient list.
Whilst you were here o'erwhelmed with your grief —
A passion most unsuiting such a man —
Cassio came hither: I shifted him away,
And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy,
Bade him anon return and here speak with me;
The which he promis'd. Do but encave yourself,
And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns,
That dwell in every region of his face;
For I will make him tell the tale anew,
Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when
He hath, and is again to cope your wife:
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience;
Or I shall say y' are all in all in spleen,
And nothing of a man.
Oth. Dost thou hear, Iago?
I will be found most cunning in my patience;
But — dost thou hear? — most bloody.
Iago. That 's not amiss;
But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw? [*Othello retires.*
Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,
A housewife that by selling her desires

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67 *unproper beds* = beds not theirs only.
68 *peculiar* = belonging to one; that is, to each one of them (the millions) respectively.
74 *list* = bound, restraint.
93 *A housewife:* pronunciation, *husif:* sense, *hussy.*

Buys herself bread and clothes: it is a creature
That dotes on Cassio; as 't is the strumpet's plague
To beguile many and be beguil'd by one:
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain
From the excess of laughter. Here he comes:

Re-enter CASSIO.

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad;
And his unbookish jealousy must construe
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures and light behaviour,
Quite in the wrong. How do you now, lieutenant?
Cas. The worser that you give me the addition
Whose want even kills me.
Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure on 't.
[*Speaking lower.*] Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power,
How quickly should you speed!
Cas. Alas, poor caitiff!
Oth. Look, how he laughs already!
Iago. I never knew woman love man so.
Cas. Alas, poor rogue! I think, i' faith, she loves me.
Oth. Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.
Iago. Do you hear, Cassio?
Oth. Now he importunes him
To tell it o'er: go to; well said, well said.
Iago. She gives it out that you shall marry her:
Do you intend it?
Cas. Ha, ha, ha!
Oth. Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?

Cas. I marry her! what? a customer! Prithee, bear some charity to my wit; do not think it so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

Oth. So, so, so, so: they laugh that win.

Iago. 'Faith, the cry goes that you shall marry her.

Cas. Prithee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Oth. Have you scor'd me? Well.

Cas. This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

Oth. Iago beckons me; now he begins the story.

Cas. She was here even now; she haunts me in every place. I was the other day talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians; and thither comes the bauble, and, by this hand, she falls me thus about my neck —

Oth. Crying "O dear Cassio!" as it were: his gesture imports it.

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[113] *well said* = well done.
[118] *customer* = common harlot. Both Iago and Cassio are led by the occasion to make out Bianca worse, or at least lower in condition, than she was.

Cas. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so hales, and pulls me: ha, ha, ha!

Oth. Now he tells how she pluck'd him to my chamber. O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.

Cas. Well, I must leave her company.

Iago. Before me! look, where she comes.

Cas. 'T is such another fitchew! marry, a perfum'd one.

Enter Bianca.

What do you mean by this haunting of me?

Bian. Let the Devil and his dam haunt you! What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the work?—A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work? There; give it your hobby-horse: wheresoever you had it, I 'll take out no work on 't.

Cas. How now, my sweet Bianca! how now! how now!

Oth. By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

Bian. An you 'll come to supper to-night, you may; an you will not, come when you are next prepar'd for. [*Exit.*

Iago. After her, after her.

Cas. 'Faith, I must; she 'll rail in the street else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Cas. 'Faith, I intend so.

Iago. Well, I may chance to see you; for I would very fain speak with you.

Cas. Prithee, come; will you?

Iago. Go to; say no more. [*Exit Cassio.*

Oth. [*Advancing.*] How shall I murder him, Iago?

Iago. Did you perceive how he laugh'd at his vice?

Oth. O Iago!

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief?

Oth. Was that mine?

Iago. Yours, by this hand: and to see how he prizes the foolish woman your wife! she gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

Oth. I would have him nine years a-killing. A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

Iago. Nay, you must forget that.

Oth. Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damn'd to-night; for she shall not live: no, my heart is turn'd to stone; I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature: she might lie by an emperor's side and command him tasks.

Iago. Nay, that 's not your way.

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141 *fitchew* = pole-cat: supposed to be very amorous.

Oth. Hang her! I do but say what she is: so delicate with her needle: an admirable musician: O! she will sing the savageness out of a bear: of so high and plenteous wit and invention: —

Iago. She 's the worse for all this.

Oth. O, a thousand thousand times: and then, of so gentle a condition!

Iago. Ay, too gentle.

Oth. Nay, that 's certain: but yet the pity of it, Iago! O Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

Iago. If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

Oth. I will chop her into messes: cuckold me!

Iago. O, 't is foul in her.

Oth. With mine officer!

Iago. That 's fouler.

Oth. Get me some poison, Iago; this night: I 'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide my mind again: this night, Iago.

Iago. Do it not with poison, strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

Oth. Good, good: the justice of it pleases: very good.

Iago. And for Cassio, let me be his undertaker: you shall hear more by midnight.

Oth. Excellent good. [*A trumpet within.*] What trumpet is that same?
Iago. Something from Venice, sure. 'T is Lodovico
Come from the Duke: and, see, your wife is with him.

Enter LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, *and* Attendants.

Lod. Save you, worthy general!
Oth. With all my heart, sir.
Lod. The Duke and senators of Venice greet you.
[*Gives him a letter.*
Oth. I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.
[*Opens the letter, and reads.*
Des. And what 's the news, good cousin Lodovico?
Iago. I am very glad to see you, signior;
Welcome to Cyprus.
Lod. I thank you. How does Lieutenant Cassio?
Iago. Lives, sir.
Des. Cousin, there 's fall'n between him and my lord
An unkind breach: but you shall make all well.
Oth. Are you sure of that?
Des. My lord?
Oth. [*Reads.*] "This fail you not to do, as you will —"
Lod. He did not call; he 's busy in the paper.
Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio?

Des. A most unhappy one: I would do much
To atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.
Oth. Fire and brimstone!
Des. My lord?
Oth. Are you wise?
Des. What, is he angry?
Lod. May be the letter mov'd him;
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.
Des. Trust me, I am glad on 't.
Oth. Indeed!
Des. My lord?
Oth. I am glad to see you mad.
Des. Why, sweet Othello, —
Oth. [*Striking her.*] Devil!
Des. I have not deserv'd this.
Lod. My lord, this would not be believ'd in Venice,
Though I should swear I saw 't: 't is very much:
Make her amends: she weeps.
Oth. O devil, devil!
If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.
Out of my sight!
Des. I will not stay to offend you. [*Going.*
Lod. Truly, an obedient lady:
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.
Oth. Mistress!
Des. My lord?
Oth. What would you with her, sir?
Lod. Who, I, my lord?
Oth. Ay; you did wish that I would make her turn:
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,
And turn again; and she can weep, sir, weep;
And she 's obedient, as you say, obedient,
Very obedient. Proceed you in your tears.
Concerning this, sir, — O well-painted passion! —
I am commanded home. — Get you away;
I 'll send for you anon. — Sir, I obey the mandate,
And will return to Venice. — Hence, avaunt! [*Exit Desdemona.*
Cassio shall have my place. And, sir, to-night,
I do entreat that we may sup together:
You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus. — Goats and monkeys! [*Exit*
Lod. Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate
Call all in all sufficient? Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue

221 *atone* = reconcile, make at one.

The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
Could neither graze nor pierce?
Iago. He is much chang'd.
Lod. Are his wits safe? is he not light of brain?
Iago. He 's that he is: I may not breathe my censure
What he might be: if what he might he is not,
I would to heaven he were!
Lod. What, strike his wife!
Iago. 'Faith, that was not so well; yet would I knew
That stroke would prove the worst!
Lod. Is it his use?
Or did the letters work upon his blood,
And new-create this fault?
Iago. Alas, alas!
It is not honesty in me to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe him,
And his own courses will denote him so
That I may save my speech: do but go after,
And mark how he continues.
Lod. I am sorry that I am deceiv'd in him. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A room in the castle.*

Enter Othello *and* Emilia.

Oth. You have seen nothing then?
Emil. Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect.
Oth. Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.
Emil. But then I saw no harm, and then I heard
Each syllable that breath made up between them.
Oth. What, did they never whisper?
Emil. Never, my lord.
Oth. Nor send you out o' th' way?
Emil. Never.
Oth. To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor nothing?
Emil. Never, my lord.
Oth. That 's strange.
Emil. I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake: if you think other,
Remove your thought; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch have put this in your head,
Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!
For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
There 's no man happy; the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.
Oth. Bid her come hither: go. [*Exit Emilia.*

---

[8] *you have seen . . . she*: mere carelessness; not the "grammar" of S.'s time.

She says enough; yet she 's a simple bawd
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,
A closet lock and key of villanous secrets:
And yet she 'll kneel and pray; I have seen her do 't.

Enter Desdemona *with* Emilia.

Des. My lord, what is your will?
Oth. Pray, chuck, come hither.
Des. What is your pleasure?
Oth. Let me see your eyes;
Look in my face.
Des. What horrible fancy 's this?
Oth. [*To Emilia.*] Some of your function, mistress;
Leave procreants alone and shut the door;
Cough, or cry "hem," if any body come:
Your mystery, your mystery: nay, dispatch. [*Exit Emilia.*
Des. Upon my knees, what doth your speech import?
I understand a fury in your words,
But not the words.
Oth. Why, what art thou?
Des. Your wife, my lord; your true
And loyal wife.
Oth. Come, swear it, damn thyself;
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee: therefore be double damn'd:
Swear thou art honest.
Des. Heaven doth truly know it.
Oth. Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell.
Des. To whom, my lord? with whom? how am I false?
Oth. O Desdemona! away! away! away!
Des. Alas the heavy day! Why do you weep?
Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?
If haply you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me: if you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.
Oth. Had it pleas'd heaven
To try me with affliction; had they rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head,
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips,
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes,
I should have found in some place of my soul
A drop of patience: but, alas, to make me
A fixed figure for the time of scorn
To point his slow unmoving finger at!
Yet could I bear that too; well, very well:

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48 *had they rain'd:* that is, the powers above.

But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,
Where either I must live, or bear no life;
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up; to be discarded thence!
Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads
To knot and gender in! Turn thy complexion there,
Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin,—
Ay, there, look grim as hell!
Des. I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.
Oth. O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,
Who art so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet
That the sense aches at thee, would thou hadst ne'er been born!
Des. Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?
Oth. Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write "whore" upon? What committed!
Committed! O thou public commoner!
I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds. What committed!
Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks,
The bawdy wind that kisses all it meets
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
And will not hear it. What committed!
Impudent strumpet!
Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.
Oth. Are not you a strumpet?
Des. No, as I am a Christian:
If to preserve this vessel for my lord
From any other foul unlawful touch
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.
Oth. What, not a whore?
Des. No, as I shall be sav'd.
Oth. Is 't possible?
Des. O, heaven forgive us!
Oth. I cry you mercy, then:
I took you for that cunning whore of Venice
That married with Othello. [*Raising his voice.*] You, mistress,
That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
And keep the gate of hell!

Re-enter EMILIA.

You, you, ay, you!
We have done our course; there 's money for your pains:
I pray you, turn the key and keep our counsel. [*Exit.*

---

[74] *forges of my cheeks:* a doubtful reading. S. surely may have written "*thy* cheeks." Not only was it Desdemona's part to flush, but Othello's cheek was black.

Emil. Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?
How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?
Des. 'Faith, half asleep.
Emil. Good madam, what 's the matter with my lord?
Des. With who?
Emil. Why, with my lord, madam.
Des. Who is thy lord?
Emil. He that is yours, sweet lady.
Des. I have none: do not talk to me, Emilia;
I cannot weep; nor answer have I none,
But what should go by water. Prithee, to-night
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets: remember;
And call thy husband hither.
Emil. Here 's a change indeed! [*Exit.*
Des. 'T is meet I should be us'd so, very meet.
How have I been behav'd, that he might stick
The small'st opinion on my least misuse?

Re-enter EMILIA *with* IAGO.

Iago. What is your pleasure, madam? How is 't with you?
Des. I cannot tell. Those that do teach young babes
Do it with gentle means and easy tasks:
He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.
Iago. What 's the matter, lady?
Emil. Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhor'd her,
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.
Des. Am I that name, Iago?
Iago. What name, fair lady?
Des. Such as she says my lord did say I was.
Emil. He call'd her whore: a beggar in his drink
Could not have laid such terms upon his callat.
Iago. Why did he so?
Des. I do not know; I am sure I am none such.
Iago. Do not weep, do not weep. Alas the day!
Emil. Hath she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father and her country and her friends,
To be call'd whore? would it not make one weep?
Des. It is my wretched fortune.
Iago. Beshrew him for 't!
How comes this trick upon him?
Des. Nay, heaven doth know.
Emil. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,
Have not devis'd this slander; I 'll be hang'd else.

---

121 *callat* = a coarse drab.

Iago. Fie, there is no such man; it is impossible.
Des. If any such there be, heaven pardon him!
Emil. A halter pardon him! and hell gnaw his bones!
Why should he call her whore? who keeps her company?
What place? what time? what form? what likelihood?
The Moor 's abus'd by some most villanous knave,
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.
O heaven, that such companions thou 'ldst unfold,
And put in every honest hand a whip
To lash the rascals naked through the world
Even from the east to the west!
Iago. Speak within door.
Emil. O, fie upon them! Some such squire he was
That turn'd your wit the seamy side without,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.
Iago. You are a fool; go to.
Des. O good Iago,
What shall I do to win my lord again?
Good friend, go to him; for, by this light of heaven,
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel:
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought or actual deed,
Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
Delighted them in any other form;
Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
And ever will — though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement — love him dearly,
Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much;
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love. I cannot say "whore:"
It doth abhor me now I speak the word;
To do the act that might the addition earn
Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.
Iago. I pray you, be content; 't is but his humour:
The business of the state does him offence,
And he does chide with you.
Des. If 't were no other, —
Iago. 'T is but so, I warrant.
[*Trumpets within.*
Hark, how these instruments summon to supper!
The messengers of Venice stay the meat:
Go in, and weep not; all things shall be well.
[*Exeunt Desdemona and Emilia.*

---

[163] *addition* = title.

[164] *vanity* = splendor, finery, as in "Vanity Fair."

[170] *stay the meat:* that is, for the meat In some parts of England a visitor is still invited to "stay dinner." Vice-regal persons and grandees had, and in some courts still have, all their movements announced by trumpets.

Enter Roderigo.

How now, Roderigo!

Rod. I do not find that thou deal'st justly with me.

Iago. What in the contrary?

Rod. Every day thou daff'st me with some device, Iago; and rather, as it seems to me now, keep'st from me all conveniency than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will indeed no longer endure it, nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suff'red.

Iago. Will you hear me, Roderigo?

Rod. 'Faith, I have heard too much, for your words and performances are no kin together.

Iago. You charge me most unjustly.

Rod. With nought but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means. The jewels you have had from me to deliver to Desdemona would half have corrupted a votarist: you have told me she hath receiv'd them and return'd me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquaintance, but I find none.

Iago. Well; go to; very well.

Rod. Very well! go to! I cannot go to, man; nor 't is not very well: nay, I think it is scurvy, and begin to find myself fobb'd in it.

Iago. Very well.

Rod. I tell you 't is not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona: if she will return me my jewels, I will give over my suit and repent my unlawful solicitation; if not, assure yourself I will seek satisfaction of you.

Iago. You have said now.

Rod. Ay, and said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.

Iago. Why, now I see there 's mettle in thee, and even from this instant do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo: thou hast taken against me a most just exception; but yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

Rod. It hath not appear'd.

Iago. I grant indeed it hath not appear'd, and your suspicion is not without wit and judgement. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that in thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever, I mean purpose, courage and valour, this night show it: if thou the next night following enjoy not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery and devise engines for my life.

Rod. Well, what is it? is it within reason and compass?

Iago. Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

Rod. Is that true? why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Iago. O, no; he goes into Mauritania and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be ling'red here by some accident · wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.

Rod. How do you mean, removing of him?

Iago. Why, by making him uncapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

Rod. And that you would have me to do?

Iago. Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups to-night with a harlotry, and thither will I go to him: he knows not yet of his honourable fortune. If you will watch his going thence, which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one, you may take him at your pleasure: I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amaz'd at it, but go along with me; I will show you such a necessity in his death that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste: about it.

Rod. I will hear further reason for this.

Iago. And you shall be satisfi'd. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Another room in the castle.*

Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA, *and* Attendants.

Lod. I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.
Oth. O, pardon me; 't will do me good to walk.
Lod. Madam, good night; I humbly thank your ladyship.
Des. Your honour is most welcome.
Oth. Will you walk, sir?
O, — Desdemona, —
Des. My lord?
Oth. Get you to bed on th' instant; I will be return'd forthwith: dismiss your attendant there: look it be done.
Des. I will, my lord. [*Exeunt Othello, Lodovico, and Attendants.*
Emil. How goes it now? he looks gentler than he did.
Des. He says he will return incontinent:
He hath commanded me to go to bed,
And bade me to dismiss you.
Emil. Dismiss me!
Des. It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia,
Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu:
We must not now displease him.
Emil. I would you had never seen him!

---

223 *a harlotry* = a harlot. S. so uses the word elsewhere.

Des. So would not I: my love doth so approve him,
That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns, —
Prithee, unpin me, — have grace and favour in them.
Emil. I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.
Des. All 's one. Good faith, how foolish are our minds!
If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.
Emil. Come, come, you talk.
Des. My mother had a maid call'd Barbara:
She was in love, and he she lov'd prov'd mad
And did forsake her: she had a song of "willow;"
An old thing 't was, but it express'd her fortune,
And she died singing it: that song to-night
Will not go from my mind; I have much to do,
But to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara. Prithee, dispatch.
Emil. Shall I go fetch your night-gown?
Des. No, unpin me here.
This Lodovico is a proper man.
Emil. A very handsome man.
Des. He speaks well.
Emil. I know a lady in Venice would have walk'd barefoot to Palestine for a touch of his nether lip.
Des. [*Singing.*]

The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow:
The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her moans;
Sing willow, willow, willow;
Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones; —

Lay by these: —

[*Singing.*] Sing willow, willow, willow;

Prithee, hie thee; he 'll come anon: —

[*Singing.*] Sing all a green willow must be my garland.
Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve, —

Nay, that 's not text. — Hark! who is 't that knocks?
Emil. It 's the wind.
Des. [*Singing.*]

I call'd my love false love; but what said he then?
Sing willow, willow, willow:
If I court moe women, you 'll couch with moe men. —

So, get thee gone; good night. Mine eyes do itch;
Doth that bode weeping?

---

[39] *The poor soul*, etc. This is an old song, which will be found in Percy's *Reliques.* It is a man's song; but S. altered it to suit his purpose, as he would have altered anything.

Emil. 'T is neither here nor there.
Des. I have heard it said so. O, these men, these men!
Dost thou in conscience think, — tell me, Emilia, —
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind?
Emil. There be some such, no question.
Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?
Emil. Why, would not you?
Des. No, by this heavenly light!
Emil. Nor I neither by this heavenly light;
I might do 't as well i' th' dark.
Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?
Emil. The world 's a huge thing: it is a great price
For a small vice.
Des. In troth, I think thou wouldst not.

Emil. In troth, I think I should; and undo 't when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring, nor for measures of lawn, nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition; but, for the whole world, — why, who would not make her husband a cuckold to make him a monarch? I should venture purgatory for 't.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong
For the whole world.

Emil. Why, the wrong is but a wrong i' th' world; and having the world for your labour, 't is a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

Des. I do not think there is any such woman.

Emil. Yes, a dozen: and as many to th' vantage as would store the world they play'd for.
But I do think it is their husbands' faults
If wives do fall: say that they slack their duties,
And pour our treasures into foreign laps,
Or else break out in peevish jealousies,
Throwing restraint upon us; or say they strike us,
Or scant our former having in despite;
Why, we have galls, and though we have some grace,
Yet have we some revenge. Let husbands know
Their wives have sense like them: they see and smell
And have their palates both for sweet and sour,
As husbands have. What is it that they do
When they change us for others? Is it sport?
I think it is: and doth affection breed it?
I think it doth: is 't frailty that thus errs?

---

[70] *joint-ring:* a double ring, one part of which shut within the other.
[72] *exhibition* = gift of money: still in use at Oxford and Cambridge.
[77] *a wrong i' th' world* = a wrong in the world's eye, a conventional wrong. **Emilia is quibbling.**
[88] *scant our former having* = cut short our former allowance of money.

It is so too: and have not we affections,
Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?
Then let them use us well: else let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us so.
Des. Good night, good night: heaven me such uses send,
Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Cyprus. A street.*

Enter IAGO and RODERIGO.

Iago. Here, stand behind this bulk; straight will he come:
Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home:
Quick, quick; fear nothing; I 'll be at thy elbow:
It makes us, or it mars us; think on that,
And fix most firm thy resolution.
Rod. Be near at hand; I may miscarry in 't.
Iago. Here, at thy hand: be bold, and take thy stand. [*Retires.*
Rod. I have no great devotion to the deed;
And yet he hath given me satisfying reasons:
'T is but a man gone. Forth, my sword: he dies.
Iago. I have rubb'd this young quat almost to the sense,
And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio,
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain: live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large
Of gold and jewels that I bobb'd from him,
As gifts to Desdemona;
It must not be: if Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life
That makes me ugly: and, besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him; there stand I in much peril:
No, he must die. But so: I hear him coming.

Enter CASSIO.

Rod. I know his gait, 't is he. — Villain, thou diest!
[*Makes a pass at Cassio.*
Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,
But that my coat is better than thou know'st:
I will make proof of thine. [*Draws, and wounds Roderigo.*
Rod. O, I am slain!
[*Iago from behind wounds Cassio in the leg, and exit.*
Cas. I am maim'd for ever. Help, ho! murther! murther!
[*Falls.*

[1] *bulk* = projection from a house.
[5] *resolution*: five syllables.
[11] *quat* = pimple.
[16] *bobb'd* = obtain'd by false pretences: slang.

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. The voice of Cassio: Iago keeps his word.
Rod. O, villain that I am!
Oth. It is even so.
Cas. O, help, ho! light! a surgeon!
Oth. 'T is he: — O brave Iago, honest and just,
That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong!
Thou teachest me. Minion, your dear lies dead,
And your unblest fate hies: strumpet, I come.
Forth of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are blotted;
Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted. [*Exit.*

Enter LODOVICO *and* GRATIANO.

Cas. What, ho! no watch? no passage? murther! murther!
Gra. 'T is some mischance; the cry is very direful.
Cas. O, help!
Lod. Hark!
Rod. O wretched villain!
Lod. Two or three groan: it is a heavy night:
These may be counterfeits: let 's think 't unsafe
To come in to the cry without more help.
Rod. Nobody come? then shall I bleed to death.
Lod. Hark!

Re-enter IAGO, *with a light.*

Gra. Here 's one comes in his shirt, with light and weapons.
Iago. Who 's there? whose noise is this that cries on murther?
Lod. We do not know.
Iago. Did not you hear a cry?
Cas. Here, here! for heaven's sake, help me!
Iago. What 's the matter?
Gra. This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.
Lod. The same indeed; a very valiant fellow.
Iago. What are you here that cry so grievously?
Cas. Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains!
Give me some help.
Iago. O me, lieutenant! what villains have done this?
Cas. I think that one of them is hereabout,
And cannot make away.
Iago. O treacherous villains!
What are you there? come in, and give some help.
[*To Lodovico and Gratiano.*
Rod. O, help me here!
Cas. That 's one of them.
Iago. O murd'rous slave! O villain!
[*Stabs Roderigo.*

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[37] *no passage* = no one passing by.

Rod. O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!
Iago. Kill men i' th' dark! — Where be these bloody thieves? —
How silent is this town! — Ho! murther! murther! —
What may you be? are you of good or evil?
Lod. As you shall prove us, praise us.
Iago. Signior Lodovico?
Lod. He, sir.
Iago. I cry you mercy. Here 's Cassio hurt by villains.
Gra. Cassio!
Iago. How is 't, brother!
Cas. My leg is cut in two.
Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!
Light, gentlemen: I 'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter BIANCA.

Bian. What is the matter, ho? who is 't that cried?
Iago. Who is 't that cried!
Bian. O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!
O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!
Iago. O notable strumpet! Cassio, may you suspect
Who they should be that have thus mangled you?
Cas. No.
Gra. I am sorry to find you thus: I have been to seek you.
Iago. Lend me a garter. So. O, for a chair,
To bear him easily hence!
Bian. Alas, he faints! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!
Iago. Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury.
Patience awhile, good Cassio. Come, come;
Lend me a light. Know we this face or no?
Alas, my friend and my dear countryman
Roderigo! no: — yes, sure: — O heaven! Roderigo.
Gra. What, of Venice?
Iago. Even he, sir: did you know him?
Gra. Know him! ay.
Iago. Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon;
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,
That so neglected you.
Gra. I am glad to see you.
Iago. How do you, Cassio? O, a chair, a chair!
Gra. Roderigo!
Iago. He, he, 't is he. [*A chair brought in.*] O, that 's well said; the chair.
Some good man bear him carefully from hence;
I 'll fetch the general's surgeon. [*To Bianca.*] For you, mistress,

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98 *well said* = well done.

Save you your labour. He that lies slain here, Cassio,
Was my dear friend: what malice was between you?
Cas. None in the world; nor do I know the man.
Iago. [*To Bian.*] What, look you pale? O, bear him out
o' th' air. [*Cassio and Roderigo are borne off.*
Stay you, good gentlemen. Look you pale, mistress?
Do you perceive the gastness of her eye?
Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon.
Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her:
Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Though tongues were out of use.

Enter EMILIA.

Emil. 'Las, what 's the matter? what 's the matter, husband?
Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark
By Roderigo and fellows that are scap'd:
He 's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.
Emil. Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!
Iago. This is the fruit of whoring. Prithee, Emilia,
Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night.
[*To Bianca.*] What, do you shake at that?
Bian. He supp'd at my house; but I therefore shake not.
Iago. O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.
Emil. Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet!
Bian. I am no strumpet; but of life as honest
As you that thus abuse me.
Emil. As I? foh! fie upon thee!
Iago. Kind gentlemen, let 's go see poor Cassio dress'd.
Come, mistress, you must tell 's another tale.
Emilia, run you to the citadel,
And tell my lord and lady what hath happ'd.
Will you go on? I pray. [*Aside.*] This is the night
That either makes me or fordoes me quite. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A bedchamber in the castle:* DESDEMONA *in bed asleep; a light burning.*

Enter OTHELLO.

Oth. It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,—
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars!—

---

[106] *gastness* = terror, dread, apprehensive fear.

[129] *fordoes* = undoes, destroys.

[1] *It is the cause.* This is, to me, one of the most doubtful and perplexing passages in all these plays. Which is the emphatic word, "it" or "is" or "cause," and what is "the cause," and of what it is the cause, I confess that I am not ready to decide. That "it" in the second line refers to Desdemona's supposed unchastity is plain enough; but that her unchastity is "the cause" is not so certain. For Othello to say to himself, and at this moment, that Desdemona's conduct is the cause of his intended murder seems very tame; and the sixth line with its conclusion, "else she 'll betray more men," seems to imply that Othello has deluded himself into looking upon his act as providential rather than retributive, and that "cause" is his emphatic word.

It is the cause. Yet I 'll not shed her blood;
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.
Yet she must die, else she 'll betray more men.
Put out the light, and then put out the light:
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me: but once put out thy light,
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume. When I have pluck'd the rose
I cannot give it vital growth again,
It must needs wither: I 'll smell it on the tree. [*Kissing her.*
Ah, balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
Justice to break her sword! One more, one more.
Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,
And love thee after. One more, and this the last:
So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears: this sorrow 's heavenly;
It strikes where it doth love. She wakes.
Des. Who 's there? Othello?
Oth. Ay, Desdemona.
Des. Will you come to bed, my lord?
Oth. Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?
Des. Ay, my lord.
Oth. If you bethink yourself of any crime
Unreconcil'd as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.
Des. Alas, my lord, what do you mean by that?
Oth. Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by:
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit;
No; heaven forfend! I would not kill thy soul.
Des. Talk you of killing?
Oth. Ay, I do.
Des. Then heaven
Have mercy on me!
Oth. Amen, with all my heart!
Des. If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.
Oth. Hum!
Des. And yet I fear you; for you are fatal then
When your eyes roll so: why I should fear I know not,
Since guiltiness I know not; but yet I feel I fear.
Oth. Think on thy sins.
Des. They are loves I bear to you.
Oth. Ay, and for that thou diest.
Des. That death 's unnatural that kills for loving.

Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?
Some bloody passion shakes your very frame:
These are portents; but yet I hope, I hope,
They do not point on me.
Oth. Peace, and be still!
Des. I will so. What 's the matter?
Oth. That handkerchief which I so lov'd and gave thee
Thou gav'st to Cassio.
Des. No, by my life and soul!
Send for the man, and ask him.
Oth. Sweet soul, take heed,
Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy death-bed.
Des. Ay, but not yet to die.
Oth. Yes, presently:
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath
Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.
Des. Then Lord have mercy on me!
Oth. I say, amen.
Des. And have you mercy too! I never did
Offend you in my life; never lov'd Cassio
But with such general warranty of heaven
As I might love; I never gave him token.
Oth. By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in 's hand.
O perjur'd woman! thou dost stone my heart,
And makes me call what I intend to do
A murther, which I thought a sacrifice:
I saw the handkerchief.
Des. He found it then;
I never gave it him: send for him hither;
Let him confess a truth.
Oth. He hath confess'd.
Des. What, my lord?
Oth. That he hath us'd thee.
Des. How? unlawfully?
Oth. Ay.
Des. He will not say so.
Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd;
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for 't.
Des. O! my fear interprets: what, is he dead?
Oth. Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge
Had stomach for them all.
Des. Alas! he is betray'd and I undone.
Oth. Out, strumpet! weep'st thou for him to my face?

---

52 *presently* = at the present time.

Des. O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not!
Oth. Down, strumpet!
Des. Kill me to-morrow: let me live to-night!
Oth. Nay, if you strive,—
Des. But half an hour!
Oth. Being done, there is no pause.
Des. But while I say one prayer!
Oth. It is too late. [*He stifles her.*
Emil. [*Within.*] My lord, my lord! what, ho! my lord, my lord!
Oth. What noise is this? Not dead? not yet quite dead?
I that am cruel am yet merciful;
I would not have thee linger in thy pain:
So, so.
Emil. [*Within.*] What, ho! my lord, my lord!
Oth. Who 's there?
Emil. [*Within.*] O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you!
Oth. Yes: 't is Emilia. By and by. She 's dead.
'T is like she comes to speak of Cassio's death.—
The noise was here. Ha! no more moving?
Still as the grave. Shall she come in? were 't good?—
I think she stirs again:—no. What 's best to do?
If she come in, she 'll sure speak to my wife.
My wife! my wife! what wife? I have no wife.
O, insupportable! O heavy hour!
Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon, and that the affrighted globe
Should yawn at alteration.
Emil. [*Within.*] I do beseech you
That I may speak with you, O, good my lord!
Oth. I had forgot thee: O, come in, Emilia:
Soft; by and by. Let me the curtains draw.
Where art thou? [*Unlocks the door.*

Enter Emilia.

What 's the matter with thee now?
Emil. O, my good lord, yonder 's foul murthers done!
Oth. What, now?
Emil. But now, my lord.
Oth. It is the very error of the moon;
She comes more nearer earth than she was wont,
And makes men mad.
Emil. Cassio, my lord, hath kill'd a young Venetian
Call'd Roderigo.
Oth. Roderigo kill'd!
And Cassio kill'd!

Emil. No, Cassio is not kill'd.
Oth. Not Cassio kill'd! then murther 's out of tune,
And sweet revenge grows harsh.
Des. O, falsely, falsely murther'd!
Emil. Alas, what cry is that?
Oth. That! what?
Emil. Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice.
Help! help, ho! help! O lady, speak again!
Sweet Desdemona! O sweet mistress, speak!
Des. A guiltless death I die.
Emil. O, who hath done this deed?
Des. Nobody; I myself. Farewell:
Commend me to my kind lord: O, farewell! [*Dies.*
Oth. Why, how should she be murther'd?
Emil. Alas, who knows?
Oth. You heard her say herself, it was not I.
Emil. She said so: I must needs report the truth.
Oth. She 's, like a liar, gone to burning hell:
'T was I that kill'd her.
Emil. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!
Oth. She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.
Emil. Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.
Oth. She was false as water.
Emil. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false: O, she was heavenly true!
Oth. Cassio did top her; ask thy husband else.
O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.
Emil. My husband!
Oth. Thy husband.
Emil. That she was false to wedlock?
Oth. Ay, with Cassio. Nay, had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I 'ld not have sold her for it.
Emil. My husband!
Oth. Ay, 't was he that told me first:
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.
Emil. My husband!
Oth. What needs this iteration, woman? I say thy husband.

---

132 *to folly* = to unchastity, as in the song, "When lovely woman stoops to folly."

145 *chrysolite:* a greenish yellow stone of no rarity and small value. It is little worn: probably S. never saw one; but the word promises largely, and it sounded well in his verse.

Emil. O mistress, villany hath made mocks with love!
My husband say that she was false!
Oth. He, woman;
I say thy husband: dost understand the word?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.
Emil. If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day! he lies to the heart:
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.
Oth. Ha!
Emil. Do thy worst:
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven
Than thou wast worthy her.
Oth. Peace, you were best.
Emil. Thou hast not half that power to do me harm
As I have to be hurt. O gull! O dolt!
As ignorant as dirt! thou hast done a deed —
I care not for thy sword; I 'll make thee known,
Though I lost twenty lives. — Help! help, ho! help!
The Moor hath kill'd my mistress! Murther! murther!

Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, IAGO, *and others.*

Mon. What is the matter? How now, general!
Emil. O, are you come, Iago? you have done well,
That men must lay their murthers on your neck.
Gra. What is the matter?
Emil. Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man:
He says thou told'st him that his wife was false:
I know thou didst not, thou 'rt not such a villain:
Speak, for my heart is full.
Iago. I told him what I thought, and told no more
Than what he found himself was apt and true.
Emil. But did you ever tell him she was false?
Iago. I did.
Emil. You told a lie; an odious, damned lie;
Upon my soul, a lie, a wicked lie.
She false with Cassio! — did you say with Cassio?
Iago. With Cassio, mistress. Go to, charm your tongue.
Emil. I will not charm my tongue; I am bound to speak:
My mistress here lies murther'd in her bed, —
All. O heavens forfend!
Emil. And your reports have set the murther on.
Oth. Nay, stare not, masters: it is true, indeed.
Gra. 'T is a strange truth.
Mon. O monstrous act!
Emil. Villany, villany, villany!
I think upon 't, I think: I smell 't: O villany! —

163 *As I have*, etc.: *as* = that.

I thought so then: — I 'll kill myself for grief: —
O villany, villany!
Iago. What, are you mad? I charge you, get you home.
Emil. Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak:
'T is proper I obey him, but not now.
Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.
Oth. O! O! O! [*He falls on the bed.*
Emil. Nay, lay thee down and roar;
For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent
That e'er did lift up eye.
Oth. [*Rising.*] O, she was foul!
I scarce did know you, uncle: there lies your niece,
Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopp'd:
I know this act shows horrible and grim.
Gra. Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father 's dead:
Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief
Shore his old thread in twain: did he live now,
This sight would make him do a desperate turn,
Yea, curse his better angel from his side,
And fall to reprobation.
Oth. 'T is pitiful; but yet Iago knows
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times committed; Cassio confess'd it;
And she did gratify his amorous works
With that recognizance and pledge of love
Which I first gave her: I saw it in his hand:
It was a handkerchief, an antique token
My father gave my mother.
Emil. O heaven! O heavenly powers!
Iago. Come, hold your peace.
Emil. 'T will out, 't will out: I peace!
No, I will speak as liberal as the north:
Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,
All, all, cry shame against me, yet I 'll speak.
Iago. Be wise, and get you home.
Emil. I will not.
[*Iago offers to stab Emilia.*
Gra. Fie!
Your sword upon a woman?
Emil. O thou dull Moor! that handkerchief thou speak'st of
I found by fortune and did give my husband;
For often, with a solemn earnestness,
More than indeed belong'd to such a trifle,
He begg'd of me to steal it.

---

192 *I thought so then.* Emilia refers to the time when (Act IV. Sc. 2) Othello accused and reviled his wife.

Iago. Villanous whore!
Emil. She give it Cassio! no, alas! I found it,
And I did give 't my husband.
Iago. Filth, thou liest!
Emil. By heaven, I do not, I do not, gentlemen.
O murtherous coxcomb! what should such a fool
Do with so good a woman?
Oth. Are there no stones in heaven
But what serve for the thunder? — Precious villain!
[*He runs at Iago: Iago, from behind, stabs Emilia, and exit.*
Gra. The woman falls; sure, he hath kill'd his wife.
Emil. Ay, ay: O, lay me by my mistress' side.
Gra. He 's gone, but his wife 's kill'd.
Mon. 'T is a notorious villain. Take you this weapon,
Which I have here recover'd from the Moor:
Come, guard the door without; let him not pass,
But kill him rather. I'll after that same villain,
For 't is a damned slave. [*Exeunt Montano and Gratiano.*
Oth. I am not valiant neither,
But every puny whipster gets my sword:
But why should honour outlive honesty?
Let it go all.
Emil. What did thy song bode, lady?
Hark, canst thou hear me? I will play the swan,
And die in music. [*Singing.*] Willow, willow, willow. —
Moor, she was chaste; she lov'd thee, cruel Moor;
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true;
So speaking as I think, I die, I die. [*Dies.*
Oth. I have another weapon in this chamber;
It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper: —
O, here it is. Uncle, I must come forth.
Gra. [*Within.*] If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear:
Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.
Oth. Look in upon me then and speak with me,
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

Re-enter Gratiano.

Gra. What is the matter?
Oth. Behold, I have a weapon;
A better never did itself sustain
Upon a soldier's thigh: I have seen the day,
That, with this little arm and this good sword,
I have made my way through more impediments
Than twenty times your stop: but, O vain boast!
Who can control his fate? 't is not so now.

---

239 *notorious:* loosely used for egregious.
258 *naked* = weaponless, as Gratiano supposes him.

Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd;
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.
Do you go back dismay'd? 't is a lost fear;
Man but a rush against Othello's breast,
And he retires. Where should Othello go?
Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starr'd wench!
Pale as thy smock! when we shall meet at compt,
This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,
And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl!
Even like thy chastity. O cursed slave!
Whip me, ye devils,
From the possession of this heavenly sight!
Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur!
Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!
O Desdemona! Desdemona! dead!
Oh! Oh! Oh!

Enter LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO *carried in a chair, and* Officers, *with* IAGO, *prisoner.*

Lod. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?
Oth. That 's he that was Othello: here I am.
Lod. Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.
Oth. I look down towards his feet; but that 's a fable.
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee. [*Wounds Iago.*
Lod. Wrench his sword from him.
Iago. I bleed, sir; but not kill'd.
Oth. I am not sorry neither: I 'ld have thee live;
For, in my sense, 't is happiness to die.
Lod. O thou Othello, that wert once so good,
Fall'n in the practice of a damned slave,
What shall be said to thee?
Oth. Why, any thing:
An honourable murtherer, if you will;
For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.
Lod. This wretch hath part confess'd his villany:
Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?
Oth. Ay.
Cas. Dear general, I never gave you cause.
Oth. I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.
Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil
Why he hath thus ensnar'd my soul and body?
Iago. Demand me nothing: what you know, you know:
From this time forth I never will speak word.
Lod. What, not to pray?
Gra. Torments will ope your lips.
Oth. Well, thou dost best.

---

292 *practice* = plots.

Lod. Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,
Which, as I think, you know not. Here is a letter
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo;
And here another: the one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.
Oth. O villain!
Cas. Most heathenish and most gross!
Lod. Now here 's another discontented paper,
Found in his pocket too; and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain;
But that belike Iago in the interim
Came in and satisfied him.
Oth. O the pernicious caitiff!
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?
Cas. I found it in my chamber:
And he himself confess'd but even now
That there he dropp'd it for a special purpose
Which wrought to his desire.
Oth. O fool! fool! fool!
Cas. There is besides in Roderigo's letter,
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came
That I was cast: and even but now he spake,
After long seeming dead, Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.
Lod. You must forsake this room, and go with us:
Your power and your command is taken off,
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,
If there be any cunning cruelty
That can torment him much and hold him long,
It shall be his. You shall close prisoner rest,
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state. Come, bring him away.
Oth. Soft you; a word or two before you go.
I have done the state some service, and they know 't.
No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak
Of one that lov'd not wisely but too well;
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought
Perplex'd in the extreme; of one whose hand,
Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away

---

318 *satisfied him* = gave him enough; killed him.

Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdu'd eyes,
Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinal gum. Set you down this;
And say besides, that in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian and traduc'd the state,
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him, thus. [*Stabs himself.*
Lod. O bloody period!
Gra. All that 's spoke is marr'd.
Oth. I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee: no way but this;
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss. [*Falls on the bed, and dies.*
Cas. This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon;
For he was great of heart.
Lod. [*To Iago.*] O Spartan dog,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!
Look on the tragic loading of this bed;
This is thy work: the object poisons sight;
Let it be hid. Gratiano, keep the house,
And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
For they succeed on you. To you, lord governor,
Remains the censure of this hellish villain;
The time, the place, the torture: O, enforce it!
Myself will straight aboard; and to the state
This heavy act with heavy heart relate. [*Exeunt.*

348 *subdu'd:* accented on the first syllable.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.

INTRODUCTION.

This drama is properly a history rather than a tragedy. In form and motive it is much more like an historical play than, for example, *Coriolanus* and *Julius Cæsar* are. In its design there is no art. Whatever it has of moral significance or of ethical value and interest pertains merely to the actual characters of its personages, and the historical incidents in which they figured, and not at all to any special manipulation of these, or to any informing of the drama by the individual spirit of the writer. Shakespeare went to North's *Plutarch* for the substance of his work, and followed his original with a more strict conformity to details, of the very minutest sort, than he did even in his English histories. Indeed, this play is, in its structure, little more than a very bald dialoguing of North's version of Plutarch's life of Marcus Antonius. But, poetically, *Antony and Cleopatra* is the most splendid production of Shakespeare's genius. Not even *Hamlet*, with all its philosophy, *Othello*, with all its passion, *King Lear*, with all its strength and its pathetic grandeur, equal it as an exhibition of Shakespeare's cunning in dramatic poetry. Within the whole wide range of literature there is no such magnificent utterance of human thought and feeling; nothing so rich, so lofty, so dazzling, so impressive; no such concentration of all the power and all the beauties of language. We do not know exactly when it was written; but internal evidence shows that it must have been produced soon after the great tragedies just mentioned, and just before its author fell into the daring indifference of his latest style; quite surely between 1605 and 1608; and probably about 1607. It was first printed in the folio of 1623. It is Shakespeare, pure and simple, in his richest and strongest period.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mark Antony,	*Triumvirs.*
Octavius Cæsar,	
M. Æmilius Lepidus,	
Sextus Pompeius.	
Domitius Enobarbus,	*friends to Antony.*
Ventidius,	
Eros,	
Scarus,	
Dercetas,	
Demetrius,	
Philo,	
Mecænas,	*friends to Cæsar.*
Agrippa,	
Dolabella,	
Proculeius,	
Thyreus,	
Gallus,	
Menas,	*friends to Pompey.*
Menecrates,	
Varrius,	

Taurus, *lieutenant-general to Cæsar.*
Canidius, *lieutenant-general to Antony.*
Silius, *an officer in Ventidius's army.*
Euphronius, *an ambassador from Antony to Cæsar.*

Alexas,	*attendants on Cleopatra.*
Mardian, a Eunuch,	
Seleucus,	
Diomedes,	

A Soothsayer.
A Clown.

Cleopatra, *Queen of Egypt.*
Octavia, *sister to Cæsar and wife to Antony.*

Charmian,	*attendants on Cleopatra.*
Iras,	

Officers, Soldiers, Messengers, and other Attendants.

Scene: In several parts of the Roman empire.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Alexandria. A room in* CLEOPATRA'S *palace.*

Enter DEMETRIUS *and* PHILO.

Phi. Nay, but this dotage of our general's
O'erflows the measure: those his goodly eyes,
That o'er the files and musters of the war
Have glow'd like plated Mars, now bend, now turn,
The office and devotion of their view
Upon a tawny front: his captain's heart,
Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst
The buckles on his breast, reneags all temper,
And is become the bellows and the fan
To cool a gipsy's lust.

Flourish. Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, *her Ladies, the Train, with Eunuchs fanning her.*

Look, where they come:
Take but good note, and you shall see in him
The triple pillar of the world transform'd
Into a strumpet's Fool: behold and see.
Cleo. If it be love indeed, tell me how much.
Ant. There 's beggary in the love that can be reckon'd.
Cleo. I 'll set a bourn how far to be belov'd.
Ant. Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

Enter an Attendant.

Att. News, my good lord, from Rome.
Ant. Grates me: the sum.
Cleo. Nay, hear them, Antony:
Fulvia perchance is angry; or, who knows
If the scarce-bearded Cæsar have not sent
His powerful mandate to you, Do this, or this;
Take in that kingdom, and enfranchise that;
Perform 't, or else we damn thee.
Ant. How, my love!

---

6 *a tawny front:* Cleopatra was a Greek, the daughter of Ptolemy, and was probably fair, although not with Teutonic fairness.

8 *reneags* = renounces, sets aside, as in *King Lear*, Act II. Sc. 2, line 71.

Cleo. Perchance! nay, and most like:
You must not stay here longer, your dismission
Is come from Cæsar; therefore hear it, Antony.
Where 's Fulvia's process? Cæsar's I would say? both?
Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt's queen,
Thou blushest, Antony; and that blood of thine
Is Cæsar's homager: else so thy cheek pays shame
When shrill-tongu'd Fulvia scolds. The messengers!
Ant. Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
Of the rang'd empire fall! Here is my space.
Kingdoms are clay: our dungy earth alike
Feeds beast as man: the nobleness of life
Is to do thus; when such a mutual pair [*Embracing.*
And such a twain can do 't, in which I bind,
On pain of punishment, the world to wit
We stand up peerless.
Cleo. Excellent falsehood!
Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her?
I 'll seem the fool I am not; Antony
Will be himself.
Ant. But stirr'd by Cleopatra.
Now, for the love of Love and her soft hours,
Let 's not confound the time with conference harsh:
There 's not a minute of our lives should stretch
Without some pleasure now. What sport to-night?
Cleo. Hear the ambassadors.
Ant. Fie, wrangling queen!
Whom every thing becomes, to chide, to laugh,
To weep; whose every passion fully strives
To make itself, in thee, fair and admir'd!
No messenger, but thine; and all alone
To-night we 'll wander through the streets and note
The qualities of people. Come, my queen;
Last night you did desire it: speak not to us.
[*Exeunt Ant. and Cleo. with their train.*
Dem. Is Cæsar with Antonius priz'd so slight?
Phi. Sir, sometimes, when he is not Antony,
He comes too short of that great property
Which still should go with Antony.
Dem. I am full sorry
That he approves the common liar, who
Thus speaks of him at Rome: but I will hope
Of better deeds to-morrow. Rest you happy! [*Exeunt.*

---

28 *process* = summons; the paper the service of which begins a suit.
39 *to wit*: the folio "to weet," a mere phonetic spelling; *wit* was pronounced *weet*.

SCENE II. *The same. Another room.*

Enter CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, *and a* Soothsayer.

Char. Lord Alexas, sweet Alexas, most any thing Alexas, almost most absolute Alexas, where 's the soothsayer that you prais'd so to th' Queen? O, that I knew this husband, which, you say, must charge his horns with garlands!

Alex. Soothsayer!

Sooth. Your will?

Char. Is this the man? Is 't you, sir, that know things?

Sooth. In nature's infinite book of secrecy
A little I can read.

Alex. Show him your hand.

Enter ENOBARBUS.

Eno. Bring in the banquet quickly; wine enough
Cleopatra's health to drink.

Char. Good sir, give me good fortune.

Sooth. I make not, but foresee.

Char. Pray, then, foresee me one.

Sooth. You shall be yet far fairer than you are.

Char. He means in flesh.

Iras. No, you shall paint when you are old.

Char. Wrinkles forbid!

Alex. Vex not his prescience; be attentive.

Char. Hush!

Sooth. You shall be more beloving than beloved.

Char. I had rather heat my liver with drinking.

Alex. Nay, hear him.

Char. Good now, some excellent fortune! Let me be married to three kings in a forenoon, and widow them all: let me have a child at fifty, to whom Herod of Jewry may do homage: find me to marry me with Octavius Cæsar, and companion me with my mistress.

Sooth. You shall outlive the lady whom you serve.

Char. O excellent! I love long life better than figs.

Sooth. You have seen and proved a fairer former fortune
Than that which is to approach.

Char. Then belike my children shall have no names: prithee, how many boys and wenches must I have?

Sooth. If every of your wishes had a womb,
And fertile every wish, a million.

Char. Out, fool! I forgive thee for a witch.

Alex. You think none but your sheets are privy to your wishes.

Char. Nay, come, tell Iras hers.

33 *my children shall have no names*=shall be bastards.

Alex. We 'll know all our fortunes.

Eno. Mine, and most of our fortunes, to-night, shall be — drunk to bed.

Iras. There 's a palm presages chastity, if nothing else.

Char. E'en as the o'erflowing Nilus presageth famine.

Iras. Go, you wild bedfellow, you cannot soothsay.

Char. Nay, if an oily palm be not a fruitful prognostication, I cannot scratch mine ear. Prithee, tell her but a work-a-day fortune.

Sooth. Your fortunes are alike.

Iras. But how, but how? give me particulars.

Sooth. I have said.

Iras. Am I not an inch of fortune better than she?

Char. Well, if you were but an inch of fortune better than I, where would you choose it?

Iras. Not in my husband's nose.

Char. Our worser thoughts heavens mend! Alexas, — come, his fortune, his fortune! O, let him marry a woman that cannot go, sweet Isis, I beseech thee! and let her die too, and give him a worse! and let worse follow worse, till the worst of all follow him laughing to his grave, fifty-fold a cuckold! Good Isis, hear me this prayer, though thou deny me a matter of more weight; good Isis, I beseech thee!

Iras. Amen. Dear goddess, hear that prayer of the people! for, as it is a heart-breaking to see a handsome man loose-wiv'd, so it is a deadly sorrow to behold a foul knave uncuckolded: therefore, dear Isis, keep decorum, and fortune him accordingly!

Char. Amen.

Alex. Lo, now, if it lay in their hands to make me a cuckold, they would make themselves whores, but they 'ld do 't!

Eno. Hush! here comes Antony.
Char. Not he; the Queen.

Enter CLEOPATRA.

Cleo. Saw you my lord?
Eno. No, lady.
Cleo. Was he not here?
Char. No, madam.
Cleo. He was dispos'd to mirth; but on the sudden
A Roman thought hath struck him. Enobarbus!
Eno. Madam?
Cleo. Seek him, and bring him hither. Where 's Alexas?
Alex. Here, at your service. My lord approaches.
Cleo. We will not look upon him: go with us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ANTONY *with a* Messenger *and* Attendants.

Mess. Fulvia thy wife first came into the field.

Ant. Against my brother Lucius?
Mess. Ay:
But soon that war had end, and the time 's state
Made friends of them, jointing their force 'gainst Cæsar;
Whose better issue in the war, from Italy,
Upon the first encounter, drave them.
Ant. Well, what worst?
Mess. The nature of bad news infects the teller.
Ant. When it concerns the fool or coward. On:
Things that are past are done with me. 'T is thus;
Who tells me true, though in his tale lie death,
I hear him as he flatter'd.
Mess. Labienus —
This is stiff news — hath, with his Parthian force,
Extended Asia from Euphrates;
His conquering banner shook from Syria
To Lydia and to Ionia;
Whilst —
Ant. Antony, thou wouldst say, —
Mess. O, my lord!
Ant. Speak to me home, mince not the general tongue:
Name Cleopatra as she is call'd in Rome;
Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase; and taunt my faults
With such full license as both truth and malice
Have power to utter. O, then we bring forth weeds,
When our quick minds lie still; and our ills told us
Is as our earing. Fare thee well awhile.
Mess. At your noble pleasure. [*Exit.*
Ant. From Sicyon, ho, the news! Speak there!
First Att. The man from Sicyon, — is there such an one?
Sec. Att. He stays upon your will.
Ant. Let him appear.
These strong Egyptian fetters I must break,
Or lose myself in dotage.

Enter another Messenger.

What are you?
Sec. Mess. Fulvia thy wife is dead.
Ant. Where died she?
Sec. Mess. In Sicyon:
Her length of sickness, with what else more serious
Importeth thee to know, this bears. [*Gives a letter.*
Ant. Forbear me.
[*Exit Sec. Messenger.*
There 's a great spirit gone! Thus did I desire it:

---

103 *our quick minds* = our living, generative minds.
104 *earing* = ploughing, tilling.

What our contempt doth often hurl from us,
We wish it ours again; the present pleasure,
By revolution low'ring, does become
The opposite of itself: she 's good, being gone;
The hand could pluck her back that shov'd her on.
I must from this enchanting queen break off:
Ten thousand harms, more than the ills I know,
My idleness doth hatch. How now! Enobarbus!

Re-enter ENOBARBUS.

Eno. What 's your pleasure, sir?

Ant. I must with haste from hence.

Eno. Why, then, we kill all our women: we see how mortal an unkindness is to them; if they suffer our departure, death 's the word.

Ant. I must be gone.

Eno. Under a compelling occasion, let women die: it were pity to cast them away for nothing; though, between them and a great cause, they should be esteemed nothing. Cleopatra, catching but the least noise of this, dies instantly; I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer moment: I do think there is mettle in death, which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such a celerity in dying.

Ant. She is cunning past man's thought.

Eno. Alack, sir, no; her passions are made of nothing but the finest part of pure love: we cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears; they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report: this cannot be cunning in her; if it be, she makes a shower of rain as well as Jove.

Ant. Would I had never seen her!

Eno. O, sir, you had then left unseen a wonderful piece of work; which not to have been blest withal would have discredited your travel.

Ant. Fulvia is dead.

Eno. Sir?

Ant. Fulvia is dead.

Eno. Fulvia!

Ant. Dead.

Eno. Why, sir, give the gods a thankful sacrifice. When it pleaseth their deities to take the wife of a man from him, it shows to man the tailors of the earth; comforting therein, that when old robes are worn out, there are members to make new. If there were no more women but Fulvia, then had you indeed a cut, and the case to be lamented: this grief is crown'd with consolation; your old smock brings forth a new petticoat: and indeed the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow.

Ant. The business she hath broached in the state
Cannot endure my absence.

Eno. And the business you have broach'd here cannot be without you; especially that of Cleopatra's, which wholly depends on your abode.

Ant. No more light answers. Let our officers
Have notice what we purpose. I shall break
The cause of our expedience to the Queen,
And get her leave to part. For not alone
The death of Fulvia, with more urgent touches,
Do strongly speak to us; but the letters too
Of many our contriving friends in Rome
Petition us at home: Sextus Pompeius
Hath given the dare to Cæsar, and commands
The empire of the sea: our slippery people,
Whose love is never link'd to the deserver
Till his deserts are past, begin to throw
Pompey the Great and all his dignities
Upon his son; who, high in name and power,
Higher than both in blood and life, stands up
For the main soldier: whose quality, going on,
The sides o' th' world may danger: much is breeding,
Which, like the courser's hair, hath yet but life,
And not a serpent's poison. Say, our pleasure,
To such whose place is under us, requires
Our quick remove from hence.
Eno. I shall do 't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same. Another room.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS.

Cleo. Where is he?
Char. I did not see him since.
Cleo. See where he is, who 's with him, what he does:
I did not send you: if you find him sad,
Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report
That I am sudden sick: quick, and return. [*Exit Alexas.*
Char. Madam, methinks, if you did love him dearly,
You do not hold the method to enforce
The like from him.
Cleo. What should I do, I do not?
Char. In each thing give him way, cross him in nothing.
Cleo. Thou teachest like a fool: the way to lose him.
Char. Tempt him not so too far; I wish, forbear:
In time we hate that which we often fear.
But here comes Antony.

---

[167] *expedience* = quick movement; here, sudden departure.

[182] *the courser's hair:* referring to the belief, not yet quite extinct, that a horse-hair steeped long in water becomes a living worm.

Enter ANTONY.

Cleo. I am sick and sullen.
Ant. I am sorry to give breathing to my purpose, —
Cleo. Help me away, dear Charmian; I shall fall:
It cannot be thus long, the sides of nature
Will not sustain it.
Ant. Now, my dearest queen, —
Cleo. Pray you, stand farther from me.
Ant. What 's the matter?
Cleo. I know, by that same eye, there 's some good news.
What says the married woman? You may go:
Would she had never given you leave to come!
Let her not say 't is I that keep you here:
I have no power upon you; hers you are.
Ant. The gods best know, —
Cleo. O, never was there queen
So mightily betray'd! yet at the first
I saw the treasons planted.
Ant. Cleopatra, —
Cleo. Why should I think you can be mine and true,
Though you in swearing shake the throned gods,
Who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness,
To be entangled with those mouth-made vows,
Which break themselves in swearing!
Ant. Most sweet queen, —
Cleo. Nay, pray you, seek no colour for your going,
But bid farewell, and go: when you sued staying,
Then was the time for words: no going then;
Eternity was in our lips and eyes,
Bliss in our brows' bent; none our parts so poor,
But was a race of heaven: they are so still,
Or thou, the greatest soldier of the world,
Art turn'd the greatest liar.
Ant. How now, lady!
Cleo. I would I had thy inches; thou shouldst know
There were a heart in Egypt.
Ant. Hear me, queen:
The strong necessity of time commands
Our services awhile; but my full heart
Remains in use with you. Our Italy
Shines o'er with civil swords: Sextus Pompeius
Makes his approaches to the port of Rome:
Equality of two domestic powers
Breed scrupulous faction: the hated, grown to strength,
Are newly grown to love: the condemn'd Pompey,
Rich in his father's honour, creeps apace

Into the hearts of such as have not thrived
Upon the present state, whose numbers threaten;
And quietness, grown sick of rest, would purge
By any desperate change: my more particular,
And that which most with you should safe my going,
Is Fulvia's death.
Cleo. Though age from folly could not give me freedom,
It does from childishness: can Fulvia die?
Ant. She 's dead, my queen:
Look here, and at thy sovereign leisure read
The garboils she awak'd; at the last, best:
See when and where she died.
Cleo. O most false love!
Where be the sacred vials thou shouldst fill
With sorrowful water? Now I see, I see,
In Fulvia's death, how mine receiv'd shall be.
Ant. Quarrel no more, but be prepar'd to know
The purposes I bear; which are, or cease,
As you shall give the advice. By the fire
That quickens Nilus' slime, I go from hence
Thy soldier, servant; making peace or war
As thou affect'st.
Cleo. Cut my lace, Charmian, come;
But let it be: I am quickly ill, and well,
So Antony loves.
Ant. My precious queen, forbear;
And give true evidence to his love, which stands
An honourable trial.
Cleo. So Fulvia told me.
I prithee, turn aside and weep for her;
Then bid adieu to me, and say the tears
Belong to Egypt: good now, play one scene
Of excellent dissembling; and let it look
Like perfect honour.
Ant. You 'll heat my blood: no more.
Cleo. You can do better yet; but this is meetly.
Ant. Now, by my sword,—
Cleo. And target. Still he mends;
But this is not the best. Look, prithee, Charmian,
How this Herculean Roman does become
The carriage of his chafe.
Ant. I 'll leave you, lady.
Cleo. Courteous lord, one word.

---

[61] *garboils* = confused contention, turmoil.

[63] *sacred vials:* the tiny lachrymal vases in which the Romans preserved the tears they shed upon the death of kinsfolk and friends, and which they placed in the funeral urns.

Sir, you and I must part, but that 's not it;
Sir, you and I have lov'd, but there 's not it;
That you know well: something it is I would,—
O, my oblivion is a very Antony,
And I am all forgotten.
Ant. But that your royalty
Holds idleness your subject, I should take you
For idleness itself.
Cleo. 'T is sweating labour
To bear such idleness so near the heart
As Cleopatra this. But, sir, forgive me;
Since my becomings kill me, when they do not
Eye well to you: your honour calls you hence;
Therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly,
And all the gods go with you! upon your sword
Sit laurel'd victory! and smooth success
Be strew'd before your feet!
Ant. Let us go. Come;
Our separation so abides, and flies,
That thou, residing here, go'st yet with me,
And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee.
Away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Rome.* CÆSAR'S *house.*

Enter OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, *reading a letter*, LEPIDUS, *and their* Train.

Cæs. You may see, Lepidus, and henceforth know,
It is not Cæsar's natural vice to hate
Our great competitor: from Alexandria
This is the news: he fishes, drinks, and wastes
The lamps of night in revel; is not more manlike
Than Cleopatra; nor the queen of Ptolemy
More womanly than he; hardly gave audience, or
Vouchsaf'd to think he had partners: you shall find there
A man who is the abstract of all faults
That all men follow.
Lep. I must not think there are
Evils enow to darken all his goodness:
His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven,
More fiery by night's blackness; hereditary,
Rather than purchas'd; what he cannot change,
Than what he chooses.
Cæs. You are too indulgent. Let us grant, it is not

---

[92] *idleness* = empty frivolity; as in "every idle word."
[13] *hereditary, rather than purchas'd* = natural rather than acquired by habit; *purchase* = to obtain in any other way than by inheritance.

Amiss to tumble on the bed of Ptolemy;
To give a kingdom for a mirth; to sit
And keep the turn of tippling with a slave;
To reel the streets at noon, and stand the buffet
With knaves that smell of sweat: say this becomes him,—
As his composure must be rare indeed
Whom these things cannot blemish,—yet must Antony
No way excuse his soils, when we do bear
So great weight in his lightness. If he fill'd
His vacancy with his voluptuousness,
Full surfeits, and the dryness of his bones,
Call on him for 't: but to confound such time,
That drums him from his sport, and speaks as loud
As his own state and ours,—'t is to be chid
As we rate boys, who, being mature in knowledge,
Pawn their experience to their present pleasure,
And so rebel to judgement.

Enter a Messenger.

Lep. Here 's more news.
Mess. Thy biddings have been done; and every hour,
Most noble Cæsar, shalt thou have report
How 't is abroad. Pompey is strong at sea;
And it appears he is belov'd of those
That only have fear'd Cæsar: to the ports
The discontents repair, and men's reports
Give him much wrong'd.
Cæs. I should have known no less.
It hath been taught us from the primal state,
That he which is was wish'd until he were;
And the ebb'd man, ne'er loved till ne'er worth love,
Comes dear'd by being lack'd. This common body,
Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,
Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide,
To rot itself with motion.
Mess. Cæsar, I bring thee word,
Menecrates and Menas, famous pirates,
Make the sea serve them, which they ear and wound
With keels of every kind: many hot inroads
They make in Italy; the borders maritime
Lack blood to think on 't, and flush youth revolt:
No vessel can peep forth, but 't is as soon
Taken as seen; for Pompey's name strikes more
Than could his war resisted.

[31] *mature in knowledge:* manifestly incorrect, but not certainly corrupt; the sense requires "immature;" but the looseness of the language and the construction in the immediately foregoing lines lead me to think that S. heedlessly wrote "mature."

[49] *ear* = plough.

Cæs. Antony,
Leave thy lascivious wassails. When thou once
Wast beaten from Modena, where thou slew'st
Hirtius and Pansa, consuls, at thy heel
Did famine follow; whom thou fought'st against,
Though daintily brought up, with patience more
Than savages could suffer: thou didst drink
The stale of horses, and the gilded puddle
Which beasts would cough at: thy palate then did deign
The roughest berry on the rudest hedge;
Yea, like the stag, when snow the pasture sheets,
The barks of trees thou browsed'st; on the Alps
It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh,
Which some did die to look on: and all this —
It wounds thine honour that I speak it now —
Was borne so like a soldier, that thy cheek
So much as lank'd not.
Lep. 'T is pity of him.
Cæs. Let his shames quickly
Drive him to Rome: 't is time we twain
Did show ourselves i' th' field; and to that end
Assemble we immediate council: Pompey
Thrives in our idleness.
Lep. To-morrow, Cæsar,
I shall be furnish'd to inform you rightly
Both what by sea and land I can be able
To front this present time.
Cæs. Till which encounter,
It is my business too. Farewell.
Lep. Farewell, my lord: what you shall know meantime
Of stirs abroad, I shall beseech you, sir,
To let me be partaker.
Cæs. Doubt not, sir;
I knew it for my bond. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *Alexandria.* Cleopatra's *palace.*

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras, *and* Mardian.

Cleo. Charmian!
Char. Madam?
Cleo. Ha, ha!
Give me to drink mandragora.
Char. Why, madam?
Cleo. That I might sleep out this great gap of time
My Antony is away.

---

62 *stale* = urine.
4 *mandragora* was a strong soporific drug.

Char. You think of him too much.
Cleo. O, 't is treason!
Char. Madam, I trust, not so.
Cleo. Thou, eunuch Mardian!
Mar. What 's your highness' pleasure?
Cleo. Not now to hear thee sing; I take no pleasure
In aught an eunuch has: 't is well for thee,
That, being unseminar'd, thy freer thoughts
May not fly forth of Egypt. Hast thou affections?
Mar. Yes, gracious madam.
Cleo. Indeed!
Mar. Not in deed, madam; for I can do nothing
But what indeed is honest to be done:
Yet have I fierce affections, and think
What Venus did with Mars.
Cleo. O Charmian,
Where think'st thou he is now? Stands he, or sits he?
Or does he walk? or is he on his horse?
O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!
Do bravely, horse! for wot'st thou whom thou mov'st?
The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm
And burgonet of men. He 's speaking now,
Or murmuring "Where 's my serpent of old Nile?"
For so he calls me: now I feed myself
With most delicious poison. Think on me,
That am with Phœbus' amorous pinches black,
And wrinkled deep in time? Broad-fronted Cæsar,
When thou wast here above the ground, I was
A morsel for a monarch: and great Pompey
Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow;
There would he anchor his aspect and die
With looking on his life.

Enter Alexas.

Alex. Sovereign of Egypt, hail!
Cleo. How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!
Yet, coming from him, that great medicine hath
With his tinct gilded thee.
How goes it with my brave Mark Antony?
Alex. Last thing he did, dear queen,
He kiss'd, — the last of many doubled kisses, —
This orient pearl. His speech sticks in my heart.
Cleo. Mine ear must pluck it thence.
Alex. "Good friend," quoth he,

---

[24] *burgonet* = a kind of helmet, unknown to Cleopatra and to Antony.

[28] *black, and wrinkl'd deep*, etc.: a great misrepresentation. Cleopatra was at this time only twenty-eight years old; and she was not black. See the previous note, page 789.

"Say, the firm Roman to great Egypt sends
This treasure of an oyster; at whose foot,
To mend the petty present, I will piece
Her opulent throne with kingdoms; all the east,
Say thou, shall call her mistress." So he nodded,
And soberly did mount an arm-girt steed,
Who neigh'd so high, that what I would have spoke
Was beastly dumb'd by him.
Cleo. What, was he sad or merry?
Alex. Like to the time o' the year between the extremes
Of hot and cold, he was nor sad nor merry.
Cleo. O well-divided disposition! Note him,
Note him, good Charmian, 't is the man; but note him:
He was not sad, for he would shine on those
That make their looks by his; he was not merry,
Which seem'd to tell them his remembrance lay
In Egypt with his joy; but between both:
O heavenly mingle! Be'st thou sad or merry,
The violence of either thee becomes,
So does it no man else. Met'st thou my posts?
Alex. Ay, madam, twenty several messengers:
Why do you send so thick?
Cleo. Who 's born that day
When I forget to send to Antony,
Shall die a beggar. Ink and paper, Charmian.
Welcome, my good Alexas. Did I, Charmian,
Ever love Cæsar so?
Char. O that brave Cæsar!
Cleo. Be chok'd with such another emphasis!
Say, the brave Antony.
Char. The valiant Cæsar!
Cleo. By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth,
If thou with Cæsar paragon again
My man of men.
Char. By your most gracious pardon,
I sing but after you.
Cleo. My salad days,
When I was green in judgement: cold in blood,
To say as I said then! But, come, away;
Get me ink and paper:
He shall have every day a several greeting,
Or I 'll unpeople Egypt. [*Exeunt.*

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[48] *arm-girt.* War horses as well as men were covered with armor. The folio has *arm-gaunt*, for which *rampant*, *arrogant*, and other even less acceptable words have been suggested.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Messina.* POMPEY'S *house.*

Enter POMPEY, MENECRATES, *and* MENAS, *in warlike manner.*

Pom. If the great gods be just, they shall assist
The deeds of justest men.
Mene. Know, worthy Pompey,
That what they do delay, they not deny.
Pom. Whiles we are suitors to their throne, decays
The thing we sue for.
Mene. We, ignorant of ourselves,
Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
Deny us for our good: so find we profit
By losing of our prayers.
Pom. I shall do well:
The people love me, and the sea is mine;
My powers are crescent, and my auguring hope
Says it will come to the full. Mark Antony
In Egypt sits at dinner, and will make
No wars without doors: Cæsar gets money where
He loses hearts: Lepidus flatters both,
Of both is flatter'd; but he neither loves,
Nor either cares for him.
Men. Cæsar and Lepidus
Are in the field: a mighty strength they carry.
Pom. Where have you this? 't is false.
Men. From Silvius, sir.
Pom. He dreams: I know they are in Rome together,
Looking for Antony. But all the charms of love,
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy wan'd lip!
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both!
Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,
Keep his brain fuming; Epicurean cooks
Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite;
That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honour
Even till a Lethe'd dulness!

Enter VARRIUS.

How now, Varrius!
Var. This is most certain that I shall deliver:
Mark Antony is every hour in Rome
Expected: since he went from Egypt 't is
A space for further travel.
Pom. I could have given less matter

A better ear. Menas, I did not think
This amorous surfeiter would have donn'd his helm
For such a petty war: his soldiership
Is twice the other twain: but let us rear
The higher our opinion, that our stirring
Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck
The ne'er-lust-wearied Antony.
Men. I cannot hope
Cæsar and Antony shall well greet together:
His wife that 's dead did trespasses to Cæsar;
His brother warr'd upon him; although, I think,
Not mov'd by Antony.
Pom. I know not, Menas,
How lesser enmities may give way to greater.
Were 't not that we stand up against them all,
'T were pregnant they should square between themselves;
For they have entertained cause enough
To draw their swords: but how the fear of us
May cement their divisions and bind up
The petty difference, we yet not know.
Be 't as our gods will have 't! It only stands
Our lives upon to use our strongest hands.
Come, Menas. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Rome. The house of* Lepidus.

Enter Enobarbus *and* Lepidus.

Lep. Good Enobarbus, 't is a worthy deed,
And shall become you well, to entreat your captain
To soft and gentle speech.
Eno. I shall entreat him
To answer like himself: if Cæsar move him,
Let Antony look over Cæsar's head
And speak as loud as Mars. By Jupiter,
Were I the wearer of Antonius' beard,
I would not shave 't to-day.
Lep. 'T is not a time
For private stomaching.
Eno. Every time
Serves for the matter that is then born in 't.
Lep. But small to greater matters must give way.
Eno. Not if the small come first.
Lep. Your speech is passion:
But, pray you, stir no embers up. Here comes
The noble Antony.

Enter ANTONY *and* VENTIDIUS.

Eno. And yonder, Cæsar.

Enter CÆSAR, MECÆNAS, *and* AGRIPPA.

Ant. If we compose well here, to Parthia:
Hark, Ventidius.
Cæs. I do not know,
Mecænas; ask Agrippa.
Lep. Noble friends,
That which combined us was most great, and let not
A leaner action rend us. What 's amiss,
May it be gently heard: when we debate
Our trivial difference loud, we do commit
Murther in healing wounds: then, noble partners,
The rather, for I earnestly beseech,
Touch you the sourest points with sweetest terms,
Nor curstness grow to the matter.
Ant. 'T is spoken well.
Were we before our armies, and to fight,
I should do thus. [*Flourish.*
Cæs. Welcome to Rome.
Ant. Thank you.
Cæs. Sit.
Ant. Sit, sir.
Cæs. Nay, then.
Ant. I learn, you take things ill which are not so,
Or being, concern you not.
Cæs. I must be laugh'd at,
If, or for nothing or a little, I
Should say myself offended, and with you
Chiefly i' th' world; more laugh'd at, that I should
Once name you derogately, when to sound your name
It not concern'd me.
Ant. My being in Egypt, Cæsar,
What was 't to you?
Cæs. No more than my residing here at Rome
Might be to you in Egypt: yet, if you there
Did practise on my state, your being in Egypt
Might be my question.
Ant. How intend you, practis'd?
Cæs. You may be pleas'd to catch at mine intent
By what did here befal me. Your wife and brother
Made wars upon me; and their contestation
Was theme for you, you were the word of war.
Ant. You do mistake your business; my brother never
Did urge me in his act: I did inquire it;

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39 *practise on* = plot against.

And have my learning from some true reports,
That drew their swords with you. Did he not rather
Discredit my authority with yours;
And make the wars alike against my stomach,
Having alike your cause? Of this my letters
Before did satisfy you. If you 'll patch a quarrel,
As matter whole you have not to make it with,
It must not be with this.
Cæs. You praise yourself
By laying defects of judgement to me; but
You patch'd up your excuses.
Ant. Not so, not so:
I know you could not lack, I am certain on 't,
Very necessity of this thought, that I,
Your partner in the cause 'gainst which he fought,
Could not with graceful eyes attend those wars
Which fronted mine own peace. As for my wife,
I would you had her spirit in such another:
The third o' the world is yours; which with a snaffle
You may pace easy, but not such a wife.

Eno. Would we had all such wives, that the men might go to wars with the women!

Ant. So much uncurbable her garboils, Cæsar,
Made out of her impatience, which not wanted
Shrewdness of policy too, I grieving grant
Did you too much disquiet: for that you must
But say, I could not help it.
Cæs. I wrote to you
When rioting in Alexandria; you
Did pocket up my letters, and with taunts
Did gibe my missive out of audience.
Ant. Sir,
He fell upon me ere admitted: then
Three kings I had newly feasted, and did want
Of what I was i' th' morning: but next day
I told him of myself; which was as much
As to have ask'd him pardon. Let this fellow
Be nothing of our strife; if we contend,
Out of our question wipe him.
Cæs. You have broken
The article of your oath; which you shall never
Have tongue to charge me with.
Lep. Soft, Cæsar!
Ant. No,

---

[67] *garboils:* here equivalent to tantrums.
[74] *missive:* a strained use of the word to mean messenger.

Lepidus, let him speak:
The honour is sacred which he talks on now,
Supposing that I lack'd it. But, on, Cæsar;
The article of my oath.
Cæs. To lend me arms and aid when I required them;
The which you both denied.
Ant. Neglected, rather;
And then when poison'd hours had bound me up
From mine own knowledge. As nearly as I may,
I 'll play the penitent to you: but mine honesty
Shall not make poor my greatness, nor my power
Work without it. Truth is, that Fulvia,
To have me out of Egypt, made wars here;
For which myself, the ignorant motive, do
So far ask pardon as befits mine honour
To stoop in such a case.
Lep. 'T is noble spoken.
Mec. If it might please you, to enforce no further
The griefs between ye: to forget them quite
Were to remember that the present need
Speaks to atone you.
Lep. Worthily spoken, Mecænas.
Eno. Or, if you borrow one another's love for the instant, you may, when you hear no more words of Pompey, return it again: you shall have time to wrangle in when you have nothing else to do.
Ant. Thou art a soldier only: speak no more.
Eno. That truth should be silent I had almost forgot.
Ant. You wrong this presence; therefore speak no more.
Eno. Go to, then; your considerate stone.
Cæs. I do not much dislike the matter, but
The manner of his speech; for 't cannot be
We shall remain in friendship, our conditions
So differing in their acts. Yet, if I knew
What hoop should hold us stanch, from edge to edge
O' th' world I would pursue it.
Agr. Give me leave, Cæsar,—
Cæs. Speak, Agrippa.
Agr. Thou hast a sister by the mother's side,
Admir'd Octavia: great Mark Antony
Is now a widower.
Cæs. Say not so, Agrippa:
If Cleopatra heard you, your reproof
Were well deserved of rashness.

98 *'t is noble spoken.* I do not doubt that here "noble" is a mere phonetic spelling of *nobly*; but a change in the text is hardly warranted.

Ant. I am not married, Cæsar: let me hear
Agrippa further speak.
Agr. To hold you in perpetual amity,
To make you brothers, and to knit your hearts
With an unslipping knot, take Antony
Octavia to his wife; whose beauty claims
No worse a husband than the best of men;
Whose virtue and whose general graces speak
That which none else can utter. By this marriage,
All little jealousies, which now seem great,
And all great fears, which now import their dangers,
Would then be nothing: truths would be tales,
Where now half tales be truths: her love to both
Would, each to other and all loves to both,
Draw after her. Pardon what I have spoke;
For 't is a studied, not a present thought,
By duty ruminated.
Ant. Will Cæsar speak?
Cæs. Not till he hears how Antony is touch'd
With what is spoke already.
Ant. What power is in Agrippa,
If I would say, "Agrippa, be it so,"
To make this good?
Cæs. The power of Cæsar, and
His power unto Octavia.
Ant. May I never
To this good purpose, that so fairly shows,
Dream of impediment! Let me have thy hand:
Further this act of grace; and from this hour
The heart of brothers govern in our loves
And sway our great designs!
Cæs. There is my hand.
A sister I bequeath you, whom no brother
Did ever love so dearly: let her live
To join our kingdoms and our hearts; and never
Fly off our loves again!
Lep. Happily, amen!
Ant. I did not think to draw my sword 'gainst Pompey;
For he hath laid strange courtesies and great
Of late upon me: I must thank him only,
Lest my remembrance suffer ill report;
At heel of that, defy him.
Lep. Time calls upon 's:
Of us must Pompey presently be sought,
Or else he seeks out us.
Ant. Where lies he?

Cæs. About the mount Misenum.
Ant. What is his strength by land?
Cæs. Great and increasing: but by sea
He is an absolute master.
Ant. So is the fame.
Would we had spoke together! Haste we for it:
Yet, ere we put ourselves in arms, dispatch we
The business we have talk'd of.
Cæs. With most gladness;
And do invite you to my sister's view,
Whither straight I'll lead you.
Ant. Let us, Lepidus,
Not lack your company.
Lep. Noble Antony,
Not sickness should detain me.
[*Flourish. Exeunt Cæsar, Antony, and Lepidus.*

Mec. Welcome from Egypt, sir.

Eno. Half the heart of Cæsar, worthy Mecænas! My honourable friend, Agrippa!

Agr. Good Enobarbus!

Mec. We have cause to be glad that matters are so well digested. You stayed well by 't in Egypt.

Eno. Ay, sir; we did sleep day out of countenance, and made the night light with drinking.

Mec. Eight wild-boars roasted whole at a breakfast, and but twelve persons there; is this true?

Eno. This was but as a fly by an eagle: we had much more monstrous matter of feast, which worthily deserved noting.

Mec. She 's a most triumphant lady, if report be square to her.

Eno. When she first met Mark Antony, she purs'd up his heart, upon the river of Cydnus.

Agr. There she appeared indeed; or my reporter devis'd well for her.

Eno. I will tell you.
The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggar'd all description: she did lie
In her pavilion — cloth-of-gold of tissue —
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see

---

168 *my sister's view* = view of my sister.

The fancy outwork nature: on each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-colour'd fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.
Agr. O, rare for Antony!
Eno. Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
So many mermaids, tended her i' th' eyes,
And made their bends adornings: at the helm
A seeming mermaid steers: the silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her; and Antony
Enthroned i' th' market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to th' air; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too
And made a gap in nature.
Agr. Rare Egyptian!
Eno. Upon her landing, Antony sent to her,
Invited her to supper: she replied,
It should be better he became her guest;
Which she entreated: our courteous Antony,
Whom ne'er the word of "No" woman heard speak,
Being barber'd ten times o'er, goes to the feast,
And for his ordinary pays his heart
For what his eyes eat only.
Agr. Royal wench!
She made great Cæsar lay his sword to bed:
He plough'd her, and she cropp'd.
Eno. I saw her once
Hop forty paces through the public street;
And having lost her breath, she spoke, and panted,
That she did make defect perfection,
And, breathless, power breathe forth.
Mec. Now Antony must leave her utterly.
Eno. Never; he will not:
Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety: other women cloy
The appetites they feed: but she makes hungry
Where most she satisfies: for vilest things

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208 *their bends adornings.* Incomprehensible; no acceptable explanation or correction has been proposed.

211 *yarely* = readily, dexterously.

225 *ordinary* = common table at an eating-house. The word continued in use until within twenty-five or thirty years.

228 *cropp'd* = was fruitful.

Become themselves in her; that the holy priests
Bless her when she is riggish.
Mec. If beauty, wisdom, modesty, can settle
The heart of Antony, Octavia is
A blessed lottery to him.
Agr. Let us go.
Good Enobarbus, make yourself my guest
Whilst you abide here.
Eno. Humbly, sir, I thank you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The same.* CÆSAR'S *house.*

Enter ANTONY, CÆSAR, OCTAVIA *between them, and* Attendants.

Ant. The world and my great office will sometimes
Divide me from your bosom.
Octa. All which time
Before the gods my knee shall bow my prayers
To them for you.
Ant. Good night, sir. My Octavia,
Read not my blemishes in the world's report:
I have not kept my square; but that to come
Shall all be done by the rule. Good night, dear lady.
Good night, sir.
Cæs. Good night. [*Exeunt Cæsar and Octavia.*

Enter Soothsayer.

Ant. Now, sirrah; you do wish yourself in Egypt?
Sooth. Would I had never come from thence, nor you
Thither!
Ant. If you can, your reason?
Sooth. I see it in
My motion, have it not in my tongue: but yet
Hie you to Egypt again.
Ant. Say to me,
Whose fortunes shall rise higher, Cæsar's or mine?
Sooth. Cæsar's.
Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side:
Thy demon, that 's thy spirit which keeps thee, is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
Where Cæsar's is not; but, near him, thy angel
Becomes a fear, as being o'erpower'd: therefore
Make space between you.
Ant. Speak this no more.
Sooth. To none but thee; no more, but when to thee.
If thou dost play with him at any game,
Thou art sure to lose; and, of that natural luck,

[240] *riggish* = wantonly amorous.
[14] *my motion* = my active part, my mind.

He beats thee 'gainst the odds: thy lustre thickens,
When he shines by: I say again, thy spirit
Is all afraid to govern thee near him;
But, he away, 't is noble.
Ant. Get thee gone:
Say to Ventidius I would speak with him: [*Exit Soothsayer.*
He shall to Parthia, Be it art or hap,
He hath spoken true: the very dice obey him;
And in our sports my better cunning faints
Under his chance: if we draw lots, he speeds;
His cocks do win the battle still of mine,
When it is all to nought; and his quails ever
Beat mine, inhoop'd, at odds. I will to Egypt:
And though I make this marriage for my peace,
I' th' east my pleasure lies.

Enter VENTIDIUS.

O, come, Ventidius,
You must to Parthia: your commission 's ready;
Follow me, and receive 't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. A street.*

Enter LEPIDUS, MECÆNAS, *and* AGRIPPA.

Lep. Trouble yourselves no further: pray you, hasten
Your generals after.
Agr. Sir, Mark Antony
Will e'en but kiss Octavia, and we 'll follow.
Lep. Till I shall see you in your soldier's dress,
Which will become you both, farewell.
Mec. We shall,
As I conceive the journey, be at the Mount
Before you, Lepidus.
Lep. Your way is shorter;
My purposes do draw me much about:
You 'll win two days upon me.
Mec. } *Agr.* } Sir, good success!
Lep. Farewell. [*Exeunt*

SCENE V. *Alexandria.* CLEOPATRA'S *palace.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS.

Cleo. Give me some music; music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.
Attend. The music, ho!

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[37] *quails.* The Romans fought quails, like cocks, pitting them within a hoop.
[6] *the Mount* = Mount Misenum.

Enter MARDIAN *the Eunuch.*

Cleo. Let it alone; let 's to billiards: come, Charmian.
Char. My arm is sore; best play with Mardian.
Cleo. As well a woman with an eunuch play'd
As with a woman. Come, you 'll play with me, sir?
Mar. As well as I can, madam.
Cleo. And when good will is show'd, though 't come too short,
The actor may plead pardon. I 'll none now:
Give me mine angle; we 'll to the river: there,
My music playing far off, I will betray
Tawny-finn'd fishes; my bended hook shall pierce
Their slimy jaws; and, as I draw them up,
I 'll think them every one an Antony,
And say "Ah, ha! you 're caught."
Char. 'T was merry when
You wager'd on your angling; when your diver
Did hang a salt-fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.
Cleo. That time, — O times! —
I laugh'd him out of patience; and that night
I laugh'd him into patience: and next morn,
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed;
Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan.

Enter a Messenger.

O, from Italy!
Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren.
Mess. Madam, madam, —
Cleo. Antonius dead! — If thou say so, villain,
Thou kill'st thy mistress: but well and free,
If thou so yield him, there is gold, and here
My bluest veins to kiss; a hand that kings
Have lipp'd, and trembled kissing.
Mess. First, madam, he is well.
Cleo. Why, there 's more gold.
But, sirrah, mark, we use
To say the dead are well: bring it to that,
The gold I give thee will I melt and pour
Down thy ill-uttering throat.
Mess. Good madam, hear me.
Cleo. Well, go to, I will;
But there 's no goodness in thy face: if Antony
Be free and healthful, — so tart a favour

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[3] *billiards* were unknown for more than one thousand years after the time of Cleopatra.
[23] *Philippan* = that which he wore at Philippi.

To trumpet such good tidings! If not well,
Thou shouldst come like a Fury crown'd with snakes,
Not like a formal man.
Mess. Will 't please you hear me?
Cleo. I have a mind to strike thee ere thou speak'st:
Yet, if thou say Antony lives, is well,
Or friends with Cæsar, or not captive to him,
I 'll set thee in a shower of gold, and hail
Rich pearls upon thee.
Mess. Madam, he 's well.
Cleo. Well said.
Mess. And friends with Cæsar.
Cleo. Thou 'rt an honest man.
Mess. Cæsar and he are greater friends than ever.
Cleo. Make thee a fortune from me.
Mess. But yet, madam, —
Cleo. I do not like "But yet," it does allay
The good precedence; fie upon "But yet"!
"But yet" is as a gaoler to bring forth
Some monstrous malefactor. Prithee, friend,
Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,
The good and bad together: he 's friends with Cæsar;
In state of health thou say'st; and thou say'st free.
Mess. Free, madam! no; I made no such report:
He 's bound unto Octavia.
Cleo. For what good turn?
Mess. For the best turn i' th' bed.
Cleo. I am pale, Charmian.
Mess. Madam, he 's married to Octavia.
Cleo. The most infectious pestilence upon thee!
[*Strikes him down.*
Mess. Good madam, patience.
Cleo. What say you? Hence,
[*Strikes him again.*
Horrible villain! or I 'll spurn thine eyes
Like balls before me; I 'll unhair thy head:
[*She hales him up and down.*
Thou shalt be whipp'd with wire, and stew'd in brine,
Smarting in lingering pickle.
Mess. Gracious madam,
I that do bring the news made not the match.
Cleo. Say 't is not so, a province I will give thee,
And make thy fortunes proud: the blow thou hadst
Shall make thy peace for moving me to rage:
And I will boot thee with what gift beside
Thy modesty can beg.

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41 *formal* = decent, decorous.

Mess. He 's married, madam.
Cleo. Rogue, thou hast liv'd too long. [*Draws a knife*
Mess. Nay, then I 'll run.
What mean you, madam? I have made no fault. [*Exit.*
Char. Good madam, keep yourself within yourself:
The man is innocent.
Cleo. Some innocents 'scape not the thunderbolt.
Melt Egypt into Nile! and kindly creatures
Turn all to serpents! Call the slave again:
Though I am mad, I will not bite him: call.
Char. He is afeard to come.
Cleo. I will not hurt him.
[*Exit Charmian.*
These hands do lack nobility, that they strike
A meaner than myself; since I myself
Have given myself the cause.

Re-enter CHARMIAN *and* Messenger.

Come hither, sir.
Though it be honest, it is never good
To bring bad news: give to a gracious message
An host of tongues; but let ill tidings tell
Themselves when they be felt.
Mess. I have done my duty.
Cleo. Is he married?
I cannot hate thee worser than I do,
If thou again say Yes.
Mess. He 's married, madam.
Cleo. The gods confound thee! dost thou hold there still?
Mess. Should I lie, madam?
Cleo. O, I would thou didst,
So half my Egypt were submerg'd and made
A cistern for scal'd snakes! Go, get thee hence:
Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me
Thou wouldst appear most ugly. He is married?
Mess. I crave your highness' pardon.
Cleo. He is married?
Mess. Take no offence that I would not offend you:
To punish me for what you make me do
Seems much unequal: he 's married to Octavia.
Cleo. O, that his fault should make a knave of thee,
That art but what thou 'rt sure of. Get thee hence;
The merchandise which thou hast brought from Rome
Are all too dear for me: lie they upon thy hand,
And be undone by 'em! [*Exit Messenger.*

---

102 *O, that*, etc.=That which is his fault must make a knave of thee, who art (as a mere messenger) only what thou knowest.

Char. Good your highness, patience.
Cleo. In praising Antony, I have dispraised Cæsar.
Char. Many times, madam.
Cleo. I am paid for 't now.
Lead me from hence;
I faint: O Iras, Charmian! 't is no matter.
Go to the fellow, good Alexas; bid him
Report the feature of Octavia, her years,
Her inclination, let him not leave out
The colour of her hair: bring me word quickly. [*Exit Alexas.*
Let him for ever go:—let him not—Charmian,
Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,
The other way 's a Mars. Bid you Alexas [*To Mardian.*
Bring me word how tall she is. Pity me, Charmian,
But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. *Near Misenum.*

Flourish. Enter Pompey *and* Menas *at one side, with drum and trumpet: at another,* Cæsar, Antony, Lepidus, Enobarbus, Mecænas, *with* Soldiers *marching.*

Pom. Your hostages I have, so have you mine;
And we shall talk before we fight.
Cæs. Most meet
That first we come to words; and therefore have we
Our written purposes before us sent;
Which, if thou hast consider'd, let us know
If 't will tie up thy discontented sword,
And carry back to Sicily much tall youth
That else must perish here.
Pom. To you all three,
The senators alone of this great world,
Chief factors for the gods, I do not know
Wherefore my father should revengers want,
Having a son and friends; since Julius Cæsar,
Who at Philippi the good Brutus ghosted,
There saw you labouring for him. What was 't
That moved pale Cassius to conspire; and what
Made the all-honour'd, honest Roman, Brutus,
With the arm'd rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,
To drench the Capitol; but that they would
Have one man but a man? And that is it
Hath made me rig my navy; at whose burthen
The anger'd ocean foams; with which I meant
To scourge the ingratitude that despiteful Rome
Cast on my noble father.
Cæs. Take your time.

[112] *feature* = make, figure and mien.

Ant. Thou canst not fear us, Pompey, with thy sails;
We 'll speak with thee at sea: at land, thou know'st
How much we do o'er-count thee.
Pom. At land, indeed,
Thou dost o'er-count me of my father's house:
But, since the cuckoo builds not for himself,
Remain in 't as thou mayst.
Lep. Be pleas'd to tell us —
For this is from the present — how you take
The offers we have sent you.
Cæs. There 's the point.
Ant. Which do not be entreated to, but weigh
What it is worth embrac'd.
Cæs. And what may follow,
To try a larger fortune.
Pom. You have made me offer
Of Sicily, Sardinia; and I must
Rid all the sea of pirates; then, to send
Measures of wheat to Rome; this 'greed upon,
To part with unhack'd edges, and bear back
Our targes undinted.
Cæs. Ant. Lep. That 's our offer.
Pom. Know, then,
I came before you here a man prepar'd
To take this offer: but Mark Antony
Put me to some impatience: though I lose
The praise of it by telling, you must know,
When Cæsar and your brother were at blows,
Your mother came to Sicily and did find
Her welcome friendly.
Ant. I have heard it, Pompey;
And am well studied for a liberal thanks
Which I do owe you.
Pom. Let me have your hand:
I did not think, sir, to have met you here.
Ant. The beds i' th' east are soft; and thanks to you,
That call'd me timelier than my purpose hither;
For I have gain'd by 't.
Cæs. Since I saw you last,
There is a change upon you.
Pom. Well, I know not
What counts harsh fortune casts upon my face;
But in my bosom shall she never come,
To make my heart her vassal.
Lep. Well met here.

24 *fear us* = frighten us.

Pom. I hope so, Lepidus. Thus we are agreed:
I crave our composition may be written,
And seal'd between us.
Cæs. That 's the next to do.
Pom. We 'll feast each other ere we part; and let 's
Draw lots who shall begin.
Ant. That will I, Pompey.
Pom. No, Antony, take the lot: but, first
Or last, your fine Egyptian cookery
Shall have the fame. I have heard that Julius Cæsar
Grew fat with feasting there.
Ant. You have heard much.
Pom. I have fair meanings, sir.
Ant. And fair words to them.
Pom. Then so much have I heard:
And I have heard, Apollodorus carried —
Eno. No more of that: he did so.
Pom. What, I pray you?
Eno. A certain queen to Cæsar in a mattress.
Pom. I know thee now: how far'st thou, soldier?
Eno. Well;
And well am like to do; for, I perceive,
Four feasts are toward.
Pom. Let me shake thy hand;
I never hated thee: I have seen thee fight,
When I have envied thy behaviour.
Eno. Sir,
I never lov'd you much; but I ha' prais'd ye,
When you have well deserv'd ten times as much
As I have said you did.
Pom. Enjoy thy plainness,
It nothing ill becomes thee.
Aboard my galley I invite you all:
Will you lead, lords?
Cæs. Ant. Lep. Show us the way, sir.
Pom. Come.
[*Exeunt all but Menas and Enobarbus.*

Men. [*Aside.*] Thy father, Pompey, would ne'er have made this treaty. — You and I have known, sir.

Eno. At sea, I think.

Men. We have, sir.

Eno. You have done well by water.

Men. And you by land.

Eno. I will praise any man that will praise me; though it cannot be denied what I have done by land.

Men. Nor what I have done by water.

Eno. Yes, something you can deny for your own safety: you have been a great thief by sea.

Men. And you by land.

Eno. There I deny my land service. But give me your hand, Menas: if our eyes had authority, here they might take two thieves kissing.

Men. All men's faces are true, whatsome'er their hands are.

Eno. But there is never a fair woman has a true face.

Men. No slander; they steal hearts.

Eno. We came hither to fight with you.

Men. For my part, I am sorry it is turn'd to a drinking. Pompey doth this day laugh away his fortune.

Eno. If he do, sure, he cannot weep 't back again.

Men. You 've said, sir. We look'd not for Mark Antony here: pray you, is he married to Cleopatra?

Eno. Cæsar's sister is called Octavia.

Men. True, sir; she was the wife of Caius Marcellus.

Eno. But she is now the wife of Marcus Antonius.

Men. Pray ye, sir?

Eno. 'T is true.

Men. Then is Cæsar and he for ever knit together.

Eno. If I were bound to divine of this unity, I would not prophesy so.

Men. I think the policy of that purpose made more in the marriage than the love of the parties.

Eno. I think so too. But you shall find, the band that seems to tie their friendship together will be the very strangler of their amity: Octavia is of a holy, cold, and still conversation.

Men. Who would not have his wife so?

Eno. Not he that himself is not so; which is Mark Antony. He will to his Egyptian dish again: then shall the sighs of Octavia blow the fire up in Cæsar; and, as I said before, that which is the strength of their amity shall prove the immediate author of their variance. Antony will use his affection where it is: he married but his occasion here.

Men. And thus it may be. Come, sir, will you aboard? I have a health for you.

Eno. I shall take it, sir: we have us'd our throats in Egypt.

Men. Come, let 's away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *On board* POMPEY'S *galley, off Misenum.*

Music plays. Enter two or three Servants *with a banquet.*

First Serv. Here they 'll be, man. Some o' their plants are ill-rooted already; the least wind i' th' world will blow them down.

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126 *occasion* = convenience.

Sec. Serv. Lepidus is high-coloured.

First Serv. They have made him drink alms-drink.

Sec. Serv. As they pinch one another by the disposition, he cries out "No more;" reconciles them to his entreaty, and himself to the drink.

First Serv. But it raises the greater war between him and his discretion.

Sec. Serv. Why, this it is to have a name in great men's fellowship: I had as lief have a reed that will do me no service as a partisan I could not heave.

First Serv. To be called into a huge sphere, and not to be seen to move in 't, are the holes where eyes should be, which pitifully disaster the cheeks.

A sennet sounded. Enter CÆSAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, POMPEY, AGRIPPA, MECÆNAS, ENOBARBUS, MENAS, *with other captains.*

Ant. [*To Cæsar.*] Thus do they, sir: they take the flow o' th' Nile
By certain scales i' th' pyramid; they know,
By the height, the lowness, or the mean, if dearth
Or foison follow: the higher Nilus swells,
The more it promises: as it ebbs, the seedsman
Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain,
And shortly comes to harvest.

Lep. You 've strange serpents there.

Ant. Ay, Lepidus.

Lep. Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun: so is your crocodile.

Ant. They are so.

Pom. Sit, — and some wine! A health to Lepidus!

Lep. I am not so well as I should be, but I 'll ne'er out.

Eno. Not till you have slept; I fear me you 'll be in till then.

Lep. Nay, certainly, I have heard the Ptolemies' pyramises are very goodly things; without contradiction, I have heard that.

Men. [*Aside to Pom.*] Pompey, a word.

Pom. [*Aside to Men.*] Say in mine ear: what is 't?

Men. [*Aside to Pom.*] Forsake thy seat, I do beseech thee, captain,
And hear me speak a word.

Pom. [*Aside to Men.*] Forbear me till anon.
This wine for Lepidus!

Lep. What manner o' thing is your crocodile?

Ant. It is shap'd, sir, like itself; and it is as broad as it hath breadth: it is just so high as it is, and moves with it own

[13] *partisan* = a heavy kind of halberd, or poll-axe.
[20] *foison* = plenty.
[40] *it own organs:* here, and in Antony's next speech, *it* = its.

organs: it lives by that which nourisheth it; and the elements once out of it, it transmigrates.

Lep. What colour is it of?

Ant. Of it own colour too.

Lep. 'T is a strange serpent.

Ant. 'T is so. And the tears of it are wet.

Cæs. Will this description satisfy him?

Ant. With the health that Pompey gives him, else he is a very epicure.

Pom. [*Aside to Men.*] Go hang, sir, hang! Tell me of that? away!
Do as I bid you. Where 's this cup I call'd for?
Men. [*Aside to Pom.*] If for the sake of merit thou wilt hear me,
Rise from thy stool.
Pom. [*Aside to Men.*] I think thou 'rt mad. The matter?
[*Rises, and walks aside.*
Men. I have ever held my cap off to thy fortunes.
Pom. Thou hast serv'd me with much faith. What 's else to say?
Be jolly, lords.
Ant. These quick-sands, Lepidus,
Keep off them, for you sink.
Men. Wilt thou be lord of all the world?
Pom. What say'st thou?
Men. Wilt thou be lord of the whole world? That 's twice.
Pom. How should that be?
Men. But entertain it,
And, though thou think me poor, I am the man
Will give thee all the world.
Pom. Hast thou drunk well?
Men. No, Pompey, I have kept me from the cup.
Thou art, if thou dar'st be, the earthly Jove:
Whate'er the ocean pales, or sky inclips,
Is thine, if thou wilt ha 't.
Pom. Show me which way.
Men. These three world-sharers, these competitors,
Are in thy vessel: let me cut the cable;
And, when we are put off, fall to their throats:
All there is thine.
Pom. Ah, this thou shouldst have done,
And not have spoke on 't! In me 't is villany;
In thee 't had been good service. Thou must know,
'T is not my profit that does lead mine honour;
Mine honour, it. Repent that e'er thy tongue
Hath so betray'd thine act: being done unknown,

I should have found it afterwards well done;
But must condemn it now. Desist, and drink.
Men. [*Aside.*] For this,
I 'll never follow thy pall'd fortunes more.
Who seeks, and will not take when once 't is offer'd,
Shall never find it more.
Pom. This health to Lepidus!
Ant. Bear him ashore. I 'll pledge it for him, Pompey.
Eno. Here 's to thee, Menas!
Men. Enobarbus, welcome!
Pom. Fill till the cup be hid.
Eno. There 's a strong fellow, Menas.
[*Pointing to the Attendant who carries off Lepidus.*
Men. Why?
Eno. A' bears the third part of the world, man; see'st not?
Men. The third part, then, is drunk: would it were all,
That it might go on wheels!
Eno. Drink thou; increase the reels.
Men. Come.
Pom. This is not yet an Alexandrian feast.
Ant. It ripens towards it. Strike the vessels, ho!
Here is to Cæsar!
Cæs. I could well forbear 't.
It 's monstrous labour, when I wash my brain,
And it grows fouler.
Ant. Be a child o' th' time.
Cæs. Possess it, I 'll make answer:
But I had rather fast from all four days
Than drink so much in one.
Eno. Ha, my brave emperor! [*To Antony.*
Shall we dance now the Egyptian Bacchanals,
And celebrate our drink?
Pom. Let 's ha 't, good soldier.
Ant. Come, let 's all take hands,
Till that the conquering wine hath steep'd our sense
In soft and delicate Lethe.
Eno. All take hands.
Make battery to our ears with the loud music:
The while I 'll place you: then the boy shall sing;
The holding every man shall bear as loud
As his strong sides can volley.
[*Music plays. Enobarbus places them hand in hand.*

[89] *go on wheels:* that is, the world; a common folk phrase in S.'s time
[98] *strike the vessels* = broach them; as we say, "break a bottle."
[108] *The holding* = the burthen, chorus.

THE SONG.

Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus with pink eyne!
In thy vats our cares be drown'd,
With thy grapes our hairs be crown'd:
Cup us, till the world go round,
Cup us, till the world go round!

Cæs. What would you more? Pompey, good night. Good brother,
Let me request you off: our graver business
Frowns at this levity. Gentle lords, let 's part;
You see we have burnt our cheeks: strong Enobarb
Is weaker than the wine; and mine own tongue
Splits what it speaks: the wild disguise hath almost
Antick'd us all. What needs more words? Good night.
Good Antony, your hand.
Pom. I 'll try you on the shore.
Ant. And shall, sir: give 's your hand.
Pom. O Antony,
You have my father's house, — But, what? we are friends.
Come, down into the boat.
Eno. Take heed you fall not.
[*Exeunt all but Enobarbus and Menas.*
Menas, I 'll not on shore.
Men. No, to my cabin.
These drums! these trumpets, flutes! what!
Let Neptune hear we bid a loud farewell
To these great fellows: sound and be hang'd, sound out!
[*Sound a flourish, with drums.*
Eno. Ho! says a'. There 's my cap.
Men. Ho! Noble captain, come. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A plain in Syria.*

Enter VENTIDIUS *as it were in triumph, with* SILIUS, *and other* Romans, Officers, *and* Soldiers; *the dead body of* PACORUS *borne before him.*

Ven. Now, darting Parthia, art thou struck; and now
Pleas'd fortune does of Marcus Crassus' death
Make me revenger. Bear the King's son's body
Before our army. Thy Pacorus, Orodes,
Pays this for Marcus Crassus.
Sil. Noble Ventidius,
Whilst yet with Parthian blood thy sword is warm,

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[4] *Pacorus* was son of Orodes, King of Parthia.

The fugitive Parthians follow; spur through Media,
Mesopotamia, and the shelters whither
The routed fly; so thy grand captain Antony
Shall set thee on triumphant chariots and
Put garlands on thy head.
Ven. O Silius, Silius,
I have done enough; a lower place, note well,
May make too great an act: for learn this, Silius;
Better to leave undone, than by our deed
Acquire too high a fame when him we serve 's away.
Cæsar and Antony have ever won
More in their officer than person: Sossius,
One of my place in Syria, his lieutenant,
For quick accumulation of renown,
Which he achiev'd by th' minute, lost his favour.
Who does i' th' wars more than his captain can
Becomes his captain's captain: and ambition,
The soldier's virtue, rather makes choice of loss,
Than gain which darkens him.
I could do more to do Antonius good,
But 't would offend him; and in his offence
Should my performance perish.
Sil. Thou hast, Ventidius, that
Without the which a soldier, and his sword,
Grants scarce distinction. Thou wilt write to Antony?
Ven. I 'll humbly signify what in his name,
That magical word of war, we have effected;
How, with his banners and his well-paid ranks,
The ne'er-yet-beaten horse of Parthia
We have jaded out o' th' field.
Sil. Where is he now?
Ven. He purposeth to Athens: whither, with what haste
The weight we must convey with 's will permit,
We shall appear before him. On, there; pass along! [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Rome. An antechamber in* Cæsar's *house.*

Enter Agrippa *at one door,* Enobarbus *at another.*

Agr. What, are the brothers parted?
Eno. They have dispatch'd with Pompey, he is gone;
The other three are sealing. Octavia weeps
To part from Rome; Cæsar is sad; and Lepidus,
Since Pompey's feast, as Menas says, is troubled
With the green sickness.
Agr. 'T is a noble Lepidus.
Eno. A very fine one: O, how he loves Cæsar!

Agr. Nay, but how dearly he adores Mark Antony!
Eno. Cæsar? Why, he's the Jupiter of men.
Agr. What's Antony? The god of Jupiter.
Eno. Spake you of Cæsar? How! the nonpareil!
Agr. O Antony! O thou Arabian bird!
Eno. Would you praise Cæsar, say "Cæsar:" go no further.
Agr. Indeed, he plied them both with excellent praises.
Eno. But he loves Cæsar best; yet he loves Antony:
Ho! hearts, tongues, figures, scribes, bards, poets, cannot
Think, speak, cast, write, sing, number, ho!
His love to Antony. But as for Cæsar,
Kneel down, kneel down, and wonder.
Agr. Both he loves.
Eno. They are his shards, and he their beetle. [*Trumpets within.*] So;
This is to horse. Adieu, noble Agrippa.
Agr. Good fortune, worthy soldier; and farewell.

Enter CÆSAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, *and* OCTAVIA.

Ant. No further, sir.
Cæs. You take from me a great part of myself;
Use me well in't. Sister, prove such a wife
As my thoughts make thee, and as my farthest band
Shall pass on thy approof. Most noble Antony,
Let not the piece of virtue, which is set
Betwixt us as the cement of our love,
To keep it builded, be the ram to batter
The fortress of it; for better might we
Have lov'd without this mean, if on both parts
This be not cherish'd.
Ant. Make me not offended
In your distrust.
Cæs. I have said.
Ant. You shall not find,
Though you be therein curious, the least cause
For what you seem to fear: so, the gods keep you,
And make the hearts of Romans serve your ends!
We will here part.
Cæs. Farewell, my dearest sister, fare thee well:
The elements be kind to thee, and make
Thy spirits all of comfort! fare thee well.
Oct. My noble brother!
Ant. The April's in her eyes: it is love's spring,
And these the showers to bring it on. Be cheerful.
Oct. Sir, look well to my husband's house; and —
Cæs. What,
Octavia?

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20 *shards:* as in pot-sherd; here the scaly wings of the beetle.

Oct. I 'll tell you in your ear.
Ant. Her tongue will not obey her heart, nor can
Her heart inform her tongue, — the swan's down-feather,
That stands upon the swell at full of tide,
And neither way inclines.
Eno. [*Aside to Agr.*] Will Cæsar weep?
Agr. [*Aside to Eno.*] He has a cloud in 's face.
Eno. [*Aside to Agr.*] He were the worse for that, were he a horse;
So is he, being a man.
Agr. [*Aside to Eno.*] Why, Enobarbus,
When Antony found Julius Cæsar dead,
He cried almost to roaring; and he wept
When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.
Eno. [*Aside to Agr.*] That year, indeed, he was troubled with a rheum;
What willingly he did confound he wail'd,
Believe 't, till I wept too.
Cæs. No, sweet Octavia,
You shall hear from me still; the time shall not
Out-go my thinking on you.
Ant. Come, sir, come;
I 'll wrestle with you in my strength of love:
Look, here I have you; thus I let you go,
And give you to the gods.
Cæs. Adieu; be happy!
Lep. Let all the number of the stars give light
To thy fair way!
Cæs. Farewell, farewell! [*Kisses Octavia.*
Ant. Farewell!
[*Trumpets sound. Exeunt.*

Scene III. *Alexandria.* Cleopatra's *palace.*

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras, *and* Alexas.

Cleo. Where is the fellow?
Alex. Half afeard to come.
Cleo. Go to, go to.

Enter the Messenger *as before.*

Come hither, sir.
Alex. Good majesty,
Herod of Jewry dare not look upon you
But when you are well pleas'd.
Cleo. That Herod's head

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[52] *were he a horse.* Horse-fanciers like to have a horse without either white or dark spot on his face.

I 'll have: but how, when Antony is gone
Through whom I might command it? Come thou near.
Mess. Most gracious majesty, —
Cleo. Didst thou behold Octavia?
Mess. Ay, dread queen.
Cleo. Where?
Mess. Madam, in Rome;
I look'd her in the face, and saw her led
Between her brother and Mark Antony.
Cleo. Is she as tall as me?
Mess. She is not, madam.
Cleo. Didst hear her speak? is she shrill-tongu'd or low?
Mess. Madam, I heard her speak; she is low-voic'd.
Cleo. That 's not so good. He cannot like her long?
Char. Like her! O Isis! 't is impossible.
Cleo. I think so, Charmian: dull of tongue, and dwarfish!
What majesty is in her gait? Remember,
If e'er thou look'dst on majesty.
Mess. She creeps:
Her motion and her station are as one;
She shows a body rather than a life,
A statue than a breather.
Cleo. Is this certain?
Mess. Or I have no observance.
Char. Three in Egypt
Cannot make better note.
Cleo. He 's very knowing;
I do perceive 't: there 's nothing in her yet:
The fellow has good judgement.
Char. Excellent.
Cleo. Guess at her years, I prithee.
Mess. Madam,
She was a widow, —
Cleo. Widow! Charmian, hark.
Mess. And I do think she 's thirty.
Cleo. Bear'st thou her face in mind? is 't long or round?
Mess. Round even to faultiness.
Cleo. For the most part, too, they are foolish that are so.
Her hair, what colour?
Mess. Brown, madam: and her forehead
As low as she would wish it.
Cleo. There 's gold for thee.
Thou must not take my former sharpness ill:
I will employ thee back again; I find thee
Most fit for business: go make thee ready;
Our letters are prepared. [*Exit Messenger.*
Char. A proper man.

Cleo. Indeed, he is so: I repent me much
That so I harried him. Why, methinks, by him,
This creature 's no such thing.
Char. Nothing, madam.
Cleo. The man hath seen some majesty, and should know.
Char. Hath he seen majesty? Isis else defend,
And serving you so long!
Cleo. I have one thing more to ask him yet, good Charmian:
But 't is no matter; thou shalt bring him to me
Where I will write. All may be well enough.
Char. I warrant you, madam. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *Athens. A room in* Antony's *house.*

Enter Antony *and* Octavia.

Ant. Nay, nay, Octavia, not only that, —
That were excusable, that, and thousands more
Of semblable import, — but he hath wag'd
New wars 'gainst Pompey; made his will, and read it
To public ear:
Spoke scantly of me: when perforce he could not
But pay me terms of honour, cold and sickly
He vented them; most narrow measure lent me:
When the best hint was given him, he not took 't,
Or did it from his teeth.
Oct. O my good lord,
Believe not all; or, if you must believe,
Stomach not all. A more unhappy lady,
If this division chance, ne'er stood between,
Praying for both parts:
The good gods will mock me presently,
When I shall pray, "O, bless my lord and husband!"
Undo that prayer, by crying out as loud,
"O, bless my brother!" Husband win, win brother,
Prays, and destroys the prayer; no midway
'Twixt these extremes at all.
Ant. Gentle Octavia,
Let your best love draw to that point, which seeks
Best to preserve it: if I lose mine honour,
I lose myself: better I were not yours
Than yours so branchless. But, as you requested,
Yourself shall go between 's: the mean time, lady,
I 'll raise the preparation of a war
Shall stain your brother: make your soonest haste;
So your desires are yours.
Oct. Thanks to my lord.

The Jove of power make me most weak, most weak,
Your reconciler! Wars 'twixt you twain would be
As if the world should cleave, and that slain men
Should solder up the rift.
Ant. When it appears to you where this begins,
Turn your displeasure that way; for our faults
Can never be so equal, that your love
Can equally move with them. Provide your going;
Choose your own company, and command what cost
Your heart has mind to. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *The same. Another room.*

Enter Enobarbus *and* Eros, *meeting.*

Eno. How now, friend Eros!
Eros. There 's strange news come, sir.
Eno. What, man?
Eros. Cæsar and Lepidus have made wars upon Pompey.
Eno. This is old: what is the success?

Eros. Cæsar, having made use of him in the wars 'gainst Pompey, presently denied him rivality; would not let him partake in the glory of the action: and not resting here, accuses him of letters he had formerly wrote to Pompey; upon his own appeal, seizes him: so the poor third is up, till death enlarge his confine.

Eno. Then, world, thou hast a pair of chaps, no more;
And throw between them all the food thou hast,
They 'll grind the one the other. Where 's Antony?
Eros. He 's walking in the garden—thus; and spurns
The rush that lies before him; cries, "Fool Lepidus!"
And threats the throat of that his officer
That murder'd Pompey.
Eno. Our great navy 's rigg'd.
Eros. For Italy and Cæsar. More, Domitius;
My lord desires you presently: my news
I might have told hereafter.
Eno. 'T will be naught:
But let it be. Bring me to Antony.
Eros. Come, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VI. *Rome.* Cæsar's *house.*

Enter Cæsar, Agrippa, *and* Mecænas.

Cæs. Contemning Rome, he has done all this, and more,
In Alexandria: here 's the manner of 't:

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[6] *the success* = the end; that which follows, succeeds.

I' th' market-place, on a tribunal silver'd,
Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
Were publicly enthron'd: at the feet sat
Cæsarion, whom they call my father's son,
And all the unlawful issue that their lust
Since then hath made between them. Unto her
He gave the stablishment of Egypt; made her
Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia,
Absolute queen.
Mec. This in the public eye?
Cæs. I' th' common show-place, where they exercise.
His sons he there proclaim'd the kings of kings:
Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia,
He gave to Alexander; to Ptolemy he assign'd
Syria, Cilicia, and Phœnicia: she
In the habiliments of the goddess Isis
That day appear'd; and oft before gave audience,
As 't is reported, so.
Mec. Let Rome be thus
Inform'd.
Agr. Who, queasy with his insolence
Already, will their good thoughts call from him.
Cæs. The people know it; and have now received
His accusations.
Agr. Who does he accuse?
Cæs. Cæsar: and that, having in Sicily
Sextus Pompeius spoil'd, we had not rated him
His part o' th' isle: then does he say, he lent me
Some shipping unrestor'd: lastly, he frets
That Lepidus of the triumvirate
Should be depos'd; and, being, that we detain
All his revenue.
Agr. Sir, this should be answer'd.
Cæs. 'T is done already, and the messenger gone.
I have told him, Lepidus was grown too cruel;
That he his high authority abus'd,
And did deserve his change: for what I have conquer'd,
I grant him part; but then, in his Armenia,
And other of his conquer'd kingdoms, I
Demand the like.
Mec. He 'll never yield to that.
Cæs. Nor must not then be yielded to in this.

Enter OCTAVIA *with her train.*

Oct. Hail, Cæsar, and my lord! hail, most dear Cæsar!
Cæs. That ever I should call thee castaway!

---

20 *queasy* = fastidious, over-nice.

Oct. You have not call'd me so, nor have you cause.
Cæs. Why have you stol'n upon us thus? You come not
Like Cæsar's sister: the wife of Antony
Should have an army for an usher, and
The neighs of horse to tell of her approach
Long ere she did appear; the trees by the way
Should have borne men; and expectation fainted,
Longing for what it had not; nay, the dust
Should have ascended to the roof of heaven,
Rais'd by your populous troops: but you are come
A market-maid to Rome; and have prevented
The ostentation of our love, which, left unshown,
Is often left unloved: we should have met you
By sea and land; supplying every stage
With an augmented greeting.
Oct. Good my lord,
To come thus was I not constrain'd, but did
On my free will. My lord, Mark Antony,
Hearing that you prepared for war, acquainted
My grieved ear withal; whereon, I begg'd
His pardon for return.
Cæs. Which soon he granted,
Being an obstruct 'tween his lust and him.
Oct. Do not say so, my lord.
Cæs. I have eyes upon him,
And his affairs come to me on the wind.
Where is he now?
Oct. My lord, in Athens.
Cæs. No, my most wronged sister; Cleopatra
Hath nodded him to her. He hath given his empire
Up to a whore; who now are levying
The kings o' th' earth for war: he hath assembled
Bocchus, the King of Libya; Archelaus,
Of Cappadocia; Philadelphos, King
Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king, Adallas;
King Malchus of Arabia; King of Pont;
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, King
Of Comagene; Polemon and Amyntas,
The Kings of Mede and Lycaonia,
With a more larger list of sceptres.
Oct. Ay me, most wretched,
That have my heart parted betwixt two friends
That do afflict each other!
Cæs. Welcome hither:
Your letters did withhold our breaking forth;
Till we perceived, both how you were wrong led,

And we in negligent danger. Cheer your heart:
Be you not troubled with the time, which drives
O'er your content these strong necessities;
But let determined things to destiny
Hold unbewail'd their way. Welcome to Rome;
Nothing more dear to me. You are abus'd
Beyond the mark of thought: and the high gods,
To do you justice, make them ministers
Of us and those that love you. Best of comfort;
And ever welcome to us.
Agr. Welcome, lady.
Mec. Welcome, dear madam.
Each heart in Rome does love and pity you:
Only the adulterous Antony, most large
In his abominations, turns you off;
And gives his potent regiment to a trull,
That noises it against us.
Oct. Is it so, sir?
Cæs. Most certain. Sister, welcome: pray you,
Be ever known to patience: my dear'st sister! [*Exeunt*

Scene VII. *Near Actium.* Antony's *camp.*

Enter Cleopatra *and* Enobarbus.

Cleo. I will be even with thee, doubt it not.
Eno. But why, why, why?
Cleo. Thou hast forspoke my being in these wars,
And say'st it is not fit.
Eno. Well, is it, is it?
Cleo. If not denounc'd against us, why should not we
Be there in person?
Eno. [*Aside.*] Well, I could reply:
If we should serve with horse and mares together,
The horse were merely lost; the mares would bear
A soldier and his horse.
Cleo. What is 't you say?
Eno. Your presence needs must puzzle Antony;
Take from his heart, take from his brain, from 's time,
What should not then be spar'd. He is already
Traduc'd for levity; and 't is said in Rome
That Photinus an eunuch and your maids
Manage this war.
Cleo. Sink Rome, and their tongues rot
That speak against us! A charge we bear i' th' war,
And, as the president of my kingdom, will

[3] *forspoke* = spoken against, like forbid.

Appear there for a man. Speak not against it;
I will not stay behind.
Eno. Nay, I have done.
Here comes the Emperor.

Enter ANTONY *and* CANIDIUS.

Ant. Is it not strange, Canidius,
That from Tarentum and Brundusium
He could so quickly cut the Ionian sea,
And take in Toryne? You have heard on 't, sweet?
Cleo. Celerity is never more admir'd
Than by the negligent.
Ant. A good rebuke,
Which might have well becom'd the best of men,
To taunt at slackness. Canidius, we
Will fight with him by sea.
Cleo. By sea! what else?
Can. Why will my lord do so?
Ant. For that he dares us to 't.
Eno. So hath my lord dar'd him to single fight.
Can. Ay, and to wage this battle at Pharsalia,
Where Cæsar fought with Pompey: but these offers,
Which serve not for his vantage, he shakes off;
And so should you.
Eno. Your ships are not well mann'd;
Your mariners are muleters, reapers, people
Ingross'd by swift impress; in Cæsar's fleet
Are those that often have 'gainst Pompey fought:
Their ships are yare; yours, heavy: no disgrace
Shall fall you for refusing him at sea,
Being prepar'd for land.
Ant. By sea, by sea.
Eno. Most worthy sir, you therein throw away
The absolute soldiership you have by land;
Distract your army, which doth most consist
Of war-mark'd footmen; leave unexecuted
Your own renowned knowledge; quite forego
The way which promises assurance; and
Give up yourself merely to chance and hazard,
From firm security.
Ant. I'll fight at sea.
Cleo. I have sixty sails, Cæsar none better.
Ant. Our overplus of shipping will we burn;
And, with the rest full-mann'd, from the head of Actium
Beat the approaching Cæsar. But if we fail,
We then can do 't at land.

---

38 *yare* = quick in movement, easily handled.

Enter a Messenger.

Thy business?

Mess. The news is true, my lord; he is descri'd;
Cæsar has taken Toryne.

Ant. Can he be there in person? 't is impossible;
Strange that his power should be. Canidius,
Our nineteen legions thou shalt hold by land,
And our twelve thousand horse. We 'll to our ship:
Away, my Thetis!

Enter a Soldier.

How now, worthy soldier!

Sold. O noble emperor, do not fight by sea;
Trust not to rotten planks: do you misdoubt
This sword and these my wounds? Let the Egyptians
And the Phœnicians go a-ducking: we
Have used to conquer, standing on the earth,
And fighting foot to foot.

Ant. Well, well: away!

[*Exeunt Antony, Cleopatra, and Enobarbus.*

Sold. By Hercules, I think I am i' th' right.

Can. Soldier, thou art: but his whole action grows
Not in the power on 't: so our leader 's led,
And we are women's men.

Sold. You keep by land
The legions and the horse whole, do you not?

Can. Marcus Octavius, Marcus Justeius,
Publicola, and Cælius, are for sea:
But we keep whole by land. This speed of Cæsar's
Carries beyond belief.

Sold. While he was yet in Rome,
His power went out in such distractions as
Beguil'd all spies.

Can. Who 's his lieutenant, hear you?

Sold. They say, one Taurus.

Can. Well I know the man.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The Emperor calls Canidius.

Can. With news the time 's with labour, and throes forth,
Each minute, some. [*Exeunt.*

Enter a Soldier. How merely this play is the North's *Plutarch* story put into Shakespearean dramatic verse is shown by the introduction of this utterly insignificant personage and by his speech. Plutarch tells that there was a valiant captain who had been wounded in Antony's service, who as he passed cried out and said, "O noble emperor, how cometh it to pass that you trust to these vile brittle ships? What! do you mistrust these wounds of mine, and this sword? Let the Egyptians and Phœnicians fight by sea, and set us on the main-land, where we use to conquer or be slain on our feet."

SCENE VIII. *A plain near Actium.*

Enter CÆSAR, *and* TAURUS, *with his army, marching.*

Cæs. Taurus!
Taur. My lord?
Cæs. Strike not by land; keep whole: provoke not battle,
Till we have done at sea. Do not exceed
The prescript of this scroll: our fortune lies
Upon this jump. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX. *Another part of the plain.*

Enter ANTONY *and* ENOBARBUS.

Ant. Set we our squadrons on yond side o' th' hill,
In eye of Cæsar's battle; from which place
We may the number of the ships behold,
And so proceed accordingly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X. *Another part of the plain.*

CANIDIUS *marcheth with his land army one way over the stage; and* TAURUS, *the lieutenant of* CÆSAR, *the other way. After their going in, is heard the noise of a sea-fight.*

Alarum. Enter ENOBARBUS.

Eno. Naught, naught, all naught! I can behold no longer:
The Antoniad, the Egyptian admiral,
With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder:
To see 't mine eyes are blasted.

Enter SCARUS.

Scar. Gods and goddesses,
All the whole synod of them!
Eno. What 's thy passion?
Scar. The greater cantle of the world is lost
With very ignorance; we have kiss'd away
Kingdoms and provinces.
Eno. How appears the fight?
Scar. On our side like the token'd pestilence,
Where death is sure. Yon ribaldred nag of Egypt, —
Whom leprosy o'ertake! — i' th' midst o' th' fight,
When vantage like a pair of twins appear'd,
Both as the same, or rather ours the elder,
The breese upon her, like a cow in June,
Hoists sails and flies.

---

6 *cantle* = corner, portion.
10 *ribaldred.* The folio *ribaudred*: as to which, much difference of opinion among editors and critics. It is here and elsewhere a mere phonetic spelling. The *l* was silent in *ribald* as in many other words.
14 *breese* = gadfly.

Eno. That I beheld:
Mine eyes did sicken at the sight, and could not
Endure a further view.
Scar. She once being loof'd,
The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
Claps on his sea-wing, and, like a doting mallard,
Leaving the fight in height, flies after her:
I never saw an action of such shame;
Experience, manhood, honour, ne'er before
Did violate so itself.
Eno. Alack, alack!

Enter Canidius.

Can. Our fortune on the sea is out of breath,
And sinks most lamentably. Had our general
Been what he knew himself, it had gone well:
O, he has given example for our flight,
Most grossly, by his own!
Eno. Ay, are you thereabouts?
Why, then, good night indeed.
Can. Toward Peloponnesus are they fled.
Scar. 'T is easy to 't; and there I will attend
What further comes.
Can. To Cæsar will I render
My legions and my horse: six kings already
Show me the way of yielding.
Eno. I 'll yet follow
The wounded chance of Antony, though my reason
Sits in the wind against me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene XI. *Alexandria.* Cleopatra's *palace.*

Enter Antony *with* Attendants.

Ant. Hark! the land bids me tread no more upon 't;
It is asham'd to bear me! Friends, come hither:
I am so lated in the world, that I
Have lost my way for ever: I have a ship
Laden with gold; take that, divide it; fly,
And make your peace with Cæsar.
All. Fly! not we.
Ant. I have fled myself; and have instructed cowards
To run and show their shoulders. Friends, be gone;
I have myself resolv'd upon a course
Which has no need of you; be gone:
My treasure 's in the harbour, take it. O,
I follow'd that I blush to look upon:

18 *loof'd* = aloofed, gone off.

My very hairs do mutiny; for the white
Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them
For fear and doting. Friends, be gone: you shall
Have letters from me to some friends that will
Sweep your way for you. Pray you, look not sad,
Nor make replies of loathness: take the hint
Which my despair proclaims; let that be left
Which leaves itself: to the sea-side straightway:
I will possess you of that ship and treasure.
Leave me, I pray, a little: pray you now:
Nay, do so; for, indeed, I have lost command,
Therefore I pray you: I 'll see you by and by. [*Sits down.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, *led by* CHARMIAN *and* IRAS; EROS *following.*

Eros. Nay, gentle madam, to him, comfort him.
Iras. Do, most dear queen.
Char. Do! why: what else?
Cleo. Let me sit down. O Juno!
Ant. No, no, no, no, no.
Eros. See you here, sir?
Ant. O fie, fie, fie!
Char. Madam!
Iras. Madam, O good empress!
Eros. Sir, sir, —
Ant. Yes, my lord, yes; he at Philippi kept
His sword e'en like a dancer; while I struck
The lean and wrinkled Cassius; and 't was I
That the mad Brutus ended: he alone
Dealt on lieutenantry, and no practice had
In the brave squares of war: yet now — No matter.
Cleo. Ah, stand by.
Eros. The Queen, my lord, the Queen.
Iras. Go to him, madam, speak to him:
He is unqualitied with very shame.
Cleo. Well then, sustain me: O!
Eros. Most noble sir, arise; the Queen approaches:
Her head 's declin'd, and death will seize her, but
Your comfort makes the rescue.
Ant. I have offended reputation,
A most unnoble swerving.
Eros. Sir, the Queen.
Ant. O, whither hast thou led me, Egypt? See,
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes
By looking back what I have left behind
'Stroy'd in dishonour.
Cleo. O my lord, my lord,
Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought
You would have follow'd.

Ant. Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder ti'd by th' strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after: o'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me.
Cleo. O, my pardon!
Ant. Now I must
To the young man send humble treaties, dodge
And palter in the shifts of lowness; who
With half the bulk o' th' world play'd as I pleas'd,
Making and marring fortunes. You did know
How much you were my conqueror; and that
My sword, made weak by my affection, would
Obey it on all cause.
Cleo. Pardon, pardon!
Ant. Fall not a tear, I say; one of them rates
All that is won and lost: give me a kiss;
Even this repays me. We sent our schoolmaster;
Is he come back? Love, I am full of lead.
Some wine, within there, and our viands! Fortune knows
We scorn her most when most she offers blows. [*Exeunt.*

Scene XII. *Egypt.* Cæsar's *camp.*

Enter Cæsar, Dolabella, Thyreus, *with others.*

Cæs. Let him appear that 's come from Antony.
Know you him?
Dol. Cæsar, 't is his schoolmaster:
An argument that he is pluck'd, when hither
He sends so poor a pinion of his wing,
Which had superfluous kings for messengers
Not many moons gone by.

Enter Euphronius, *ambassador from* Antony.

Cæs. Approach, and speak.
Euph. Such as I am, I come from Antony:
I was of late as petty to his ends
As is the morn-dew on the myrtle-leaf
To his grand sea.
Cæs. Be 't so: declare thine office.
Euph. Lord of his fortunes he salutes thee, and
Requires to live in Egypt: which not granted,
He lessens his requests; and to thee sues
To let him breathe between the heavens and earth,
A private man in Athens: this for him.
Next, Cleopatra does confess thy greatness;

Submits her to thy might; and of thee craves
The circle of the Ptolemies for her heirs,
Now hazarded to thy grace.
Cæs. For Antony,
I have no ears to his request. The Queen
Of audience nor desire shall fail, so she
From Egypt drive her all-disgraced friend,
Or take his life there: this if she perform,
She shall not sue unheard. So to them both.
Euph. Fortune pursue thee!
Cæs. Bring him through the bands.
[*Exit Euphronius.*
[*To Thyreus.*] To try thy eloquence, now 't is time: dispatch;
From Antony win Cleopatra: promise,
And in our name, what she requires; add more,
From thine invention, offers: women are not
In their best fortunes strong; but want will perjure
The ne'er-touch'd vestal: try thy cunning, Thyreus;
Make thine own edict for thy pains, which we
Will answer as a law.
Thyr. Cæsar, I go.
Cæs. Observe how Antony becomes his flaw,
And what thou think'st his very action speaks
In every power that moves.
Thyr. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XIII. *Alexandria.* CLEOPATRA'S *palace.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, *and* IRAS.

Cleo. What shall we do, Enobarbus?
Eno. Think, and die.
Cleo. Is Antony or we in fault for this?
Eno. Antony only, that would make his will
Lord of his reason. What though you fled
From that great face of war, whose several ranges
Frighted each other? why should he follow?
The itch of his affection should not then
Have nick'd his captainship; at such a point,
When half to half the world oppos'd, he being
The mered question: 't was a shame no less
Than was his loss, to course your flying flags,
And leave his navy gazing.
Cleo. Prithee, peace.

---

[29] *offers* = add more offers from thine invention: a fine example of S.'s utter recklessness in the use of language.
[10] *mered:* an amazing participial adjective, formed from *mere.*

Enter ANTONY *with* EUPHRONIUS, *the Ambassador.*

Ant. Is that his answer?
Euph. Ay, my lord.
Ant. The Queen shall then have courtesy, so she
Will yield us up.
Euph. He says so.
Ant. Let her know 't.
To the boy Cæsar send this grizzled head,
And he will fill thy wishes to the brim
With principalities.
Cleo. That head, my lord?
Ant. To him again: tell him he wears the rose
Of youth upon him; from which the world should note
Something particular: his coin, ships, legions,
May be a coward's; whose ministers would prevail
Under the service of a child as soon
As i' th' command of Cæsar: I dare him therefore
To lay his gay comparisons apart,
And answer me declin'd, sword against sword,
Ourselves alone. I 'll write it: follow me.
[*Exeunt Antony and Euphronius.*
Eno. [*Aside.*] Yes, like enough, high-battled Cæsar will
Unstate his happiness, and be stag'd to th' show,
Against a sworder! I see men's judgements are
A parcel of their fortunes; and things outward
Do draw the inward quality after them,
To suffer all alike. That he should dream,
Knowing all measures, the full Cæsar will
Answer his emptiness! Cæsar, thou hast subdu'd
His judgement too.

Enter an Attendant.

Att. A messenger from Cæsar.
Cleo. What, no more ceremony? See, my women!
Against the blown rose may they stop their nose
That kneel'd unto the buds. Admit him, sir. [*Exit Attendant.*
Eno. [*Aside.*] Mine honesty and I begin to square.
The loyalty well held to fools does make
Our faith mere folly: yet he that can endure
To follow with allegiance a fall'n lord
Does conquer him that did his master conquer,
And earns a place i' th' story.

Enter THYREUS.

Cleo. Cæsar's will?
Thyr. Hear it apart.

---

[41] *to square* = to "square off." Enobarbus's interest and his sense of honor begin to contend within him.

Cleo. None but friends: say boldly.
Thyr. So, haply, are they friends to Antony.
Eno. He needs as many, sir, as Cæsar has;
Or needs not us. If Cæsar please, our master
Will leap to be his friend: for us, you know
Whose he is we are, and that is, Cæsar's.
Thyr. So.
Thus then, thou most renown'd: Cæsar entreats,
Not to consider in what case thou stand'st,
Further than he is Cæsar.
Cleo. Go on: right royal.
Thyr. He knows that you embrace not Antony
As you did love, but as you fear'd him.
Cleo. O!
Thyr. The scars upon your honour, therefore, he
Does pity, as constrained blemishes,
Not as deserv'd.
Cleo. He is a god, and knows
What is most right: mine honour was not yielded,
But conquer'd merely.
Eno. [*Aside.*] To be sure of that,
I will ask Antony. Sir, sir, thou art so leaky,
That we must leave thee to thy sinking, for
Thy dearest quit thee. [*Exit.*
Thyr. Shall I say to Cæsar
What you require of him? for he partly begs
To be desir'd to give. It much would please him,
That of his fortunes you should make a staff
To lean upon: but it would warm his spirits,
To hear from me you had left Antony,
And put yourself under his shroud,
The universal landlord.
Cleo. What 's your name?
Thyr. My name is Thyreus.
Cleo. Most kind messenger,
Say to great Cæsar this: in deputation
I kiss his conquering hand: tell him, I am prompt
To lay my crown at 's feet, and there to kneel:
Tell him, from his all-obeying breath I hear
The doom of Egypt.
Thyr. 'T is your noblest course.
Wisdom and fortune combating together,
If that the former dare but what it can,

---

[71] *shroud* = shelter. See "We 'll shroud ourselves," 3 *Henry VI.*, Act III. Sc. 1, line 1.
[74] *in deputation* = by proxy, deputy.

No chance may shake it. Give me grace to lay
My duty on your hand.
Cleo. Your Cæsar's father oft,
When he hath mus'd of taking kingdoms in,
Bestow'd his lips on that unworthy place,
As it rain'd kisses.

Re-enter Antony *and* Enobarbus.

Ant. Favours, by Jove that thunders!
What art thou, fellow?
Thyr. One that but performs
The bidding of the fullest man, and worthiest
To have command obey'd.
Eno. [*Aside.*] You will be whipp'd.
Ant. Approach there! Ah, you kite! Now, gods and devils!
Authority melts from me: of late, when I cried "Ho!"
Like boys unto a muss, kings would start forth,
And cry "Your will?" Have you no ears? I am
Antony yet.

Enter Attendants.

Take hence this Jack, and whip him.
Eno. [*Aside.*] 'T is better playing with a lion's whelp
Than with an old one dying.
Ant. Moon and stars!
Whip him. Were 't twenty of the greatest tributaries
That do acknowledge Cæsar, should I find them
So saucy with the hand of she here, — what 's her name,
Since she was Cleopatra? Whip him, fellows,
Till, like a boy, you see him cringe his face,
And whine aloud for mercy: take him hence.
Thyr. Mark Antony!
Ant. Tug him away: being whipp'd,
Bring him again: this Jack of Cæsar's shall
Bear us an errand to him. [*Exeunt Attendants with Thyreus.*
You were half blasted ere I knew you: ha!
Have I my pillow left unpress'd in Rome,
Forborne the getting of a lawful race,
And by a gem of women, to be abus'd
By one that looks on feeders?
Cleo. Good my lord, —
Ant. You have been a boggler ever:
And when we in our viciousness grow hard —
O misery on 't! — the wise gods seel our eyes;

---

[82] *Your Cæsar's father.* Julius Cæsar was not the father, but the great uncle of Octavius (Augustus), whom he adopted.
[98] *the hand of she:* mere reckless indifference: not English then more than now.
[109] *feeders* = dependents.

In our own filth drop our clear judgements; make us
Adore our errors; laugh at 's, while we strut
To our confusion.
Cleo. O, is 't come to this?
Ant. I found you as a morsel cold upon
Dead Cæsar's trencher; nay, you were a fragment
Of Cneius Pompey's; besides what hotter hours,
Unregister'd in vulgar fame, you have
Luxuriously pick'd out: for, I am sure,
Though you can guess what temperance should be,
You know not what it is.
Cleo. Wherefore is this?
Ant. To let a fellow that will take rewards
And say "God quit you!" be familiar with
My playfellow, your hand; this kingly seal
And plighter of high hearts! O, that I were
Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar
The horn'd herd! for I have savage cause;
And to proclaim it civilly, were like
A halter'd neck which does the hangman thank
For being yare about him.

Re-enter Attendants *with* THYREUS.

Is he whipp'd?
First Att. Soundly, my lord.
Ant. Cried he? and begg'd he pardon?
First Att. He did ask favour.
Ant. If that thy father live, let him repent
Thou wast not made his daughter; and be thou sorry
To follow Cæsar in his triumph, since
Thou hast been whipp'd for following him: henceforth
The white hand of a lady fever thee,
Shake thou to look on 't. Get thee back to Cæsar,
Tell him thy entertainment: look thou say
He makes me angry with him; for he seems
Proud and disdainful, harping on what I am,
Not what he knew I was: he makes me angry;
And at this time most easy 't is to do 't,
When my good stars, that were my former guides,
Have empty left their orbs, and shot their fires
Into the abysm of hell. If he mislike
My speech and what is done, tell him he has
Hipparchus, my enfranched bondman, whom
He may at pleasure whip, or hang, or torture,
As he shall like, to quit me: urge it thou:
Hence with thy stripes, begone! [*Exit Thyreus.*

149 *enfranched:* a clipped form of enfranchised.

Cleo. Have you done yet?
Ant. Alack, our terrene moon
Is now eclips'd; and it portends alone
The fall of Antony!
Cleo. I must stay his time.
Ant. To flatter Cæsar, would you mingle eyes
With one that ties his points?
Cleo. Not know me yet?
Ant. Cold-hearted toward me?
Cleo. Ah, dear, if I be so,
From my cold heart let heaven engender hail,
And poison it in the source; and the first stone
Drop in my neck: as it determines, so
Dissolve my life! The next Cæsarion smite!
Till by degrees the memory of my womb,
Together with my brave Egyptians all,
By the discandying of this pelleted storm,
Lie graveless, till the flies and gnats of Nile
Have buried them for prey!
Ant. I am satisfied.
Cæsar sits down in Alexandria; where
I will oppose his fate. Our force by land
Hath nobly held; our sever'd navy too
Have knit again, and fleet, threatening most sea-like.
Where hast thou been, my heart? Dost thou hear, lady?
If from the field I shall return once more
To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood;
I and my sword will earn our chronicle:
There 's hope in 't yet.
Cleo. That 's my brave lord!
Ant. I will be treble-sinew'd, hearted, breathed,
And fight maliciously: for when mine hours
Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives
Of me for jests; but now I 'll set my teeth,
And send to darkness all that stop me. Come,
Let 's have one other gaudy night: call to me
All my sad captains; fill our bowls once more;
Let 's mock the midnight bell.
Cleo. It is my birth-day:
I had thought to have held it poor; but, since my lord
Is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra.
Ant. We will yet do well.
Cleo. Call all his noble captains to my lord.
Ant. Do so, we 'll speak to them; and to-night I 'll force

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[157] *ties his points* = acts as his body-servant. The points tied the doublet to the hose, but not in Rome.

The wine peep through their scars. Come on, my queen;
There 's sap in 't yet. The next time I do fight,
I 'll make death love me; for I will contend
Even with his pestilent scythe. [*Exeunt all but Enobarbus.*
Eno. Now he 'll outstare the lightning. To be furious,
Is to be frighted out of fear; and in that mood
The dove will peck the estridge; and I see still,
A diminution in our captain's brain
Restores his heart: when valour preys on reason,
It eats the sword it fights with. I will seek
Some way to leave him. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Before Alexandria.* CÆSAR'S *camp.*

Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, *and* MECÆNAS, *with his Army;* CÆSAR *reading a letter.*

Cæs. He calls me boy; and chides, as he had power
To beat me out of Egypt; my messenger
He hath whipp'd with rods; dares me to personal combat,
Cæsar to Antony: let the old ruffian know
I have many other ways to die; meantime
Laugh at his challenge.
Mec. Cæsar must think,
When one so great begins to rage, he 's hunted
Even to falling. Give him no breath, but now
Make boot of his distraction: never anger
Made good guard for itself.
Cæs. Let our best heads
Know, that to-morrow the last of many battles
We mean to fight: within our files there are,
Of those that serv'd Mark Antony but late,
Enough to fetch him in. See it done:
And feast the army; we have store to do 't,
And they have earn'd the waste. Poor Antony! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Alexandria.* CLEOPATRA'S *palace.*

Enter ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, *with others.*

Ant. He will not fight with me, Domitius.
Eno. No.
Ant. Why should he not?
Eno. He thinks, being twenty times of better fortune,
He is twenty men to one.
Ant. To-morrow, soldier,

By sea and land I'll fight: or I will live,
Or bathe my dying honour in the blood
Shall make it live again. Woo 't thou fight well?
Eno. I'll strike, and cry "Take all."
Ant. Well said; come on.
Call forth my household servants: let 's to-night
Be bounteous at our meal.

Enter three or four Servitors.

Give me thy hand,
Thou hast been rightly honest; — so hast thou; —
Thou, — and thou, — and thou: — you have serv'd me well,
And kings have been your fellows.
Cleo. [*Aside to Eno.*] What means this?
Eno. [*Aside to Cleo.*] 'T is one of those odd tricks which sorrow shoots
Out of the mind.
Ant. And thou art honest too.
I wish I could be made so many men,
And all of you clapp'd up together in
An Antony, that I might do you service
So good as you have done.
All. The gods forbid!
Ant. Well, my good fellows, wait on me to-night:
Scant not my cups; and make as much of me
As when mine empire was your fellow too,
And suffer'd my command.
Cleo. [*Aside to Eno.*] What does he mean?
Eno. [*Aside to Cleo.*] To make his followers weep.
Ant. Tend me to-night;
May be it is the period of your duty:
Haply you shall not see me more; or if,
A mangled shadow: perchance to-morrow
You'll serve another master. I look on you
As one that takes his leave. Mine honest friends,
I turn you not away; but, like a master
Marri'd to your good service, stay till death:
Tend me to-night two hours, I ask no more,
And the gods yield you for 't!
Eno. What mean you, sir,
To give them this discomfort? Look, they weep;
And I, an ass, am onion-ey'd: for shame,
Transform us not to women.
Ant. Ho, ho, ho!
Now the witch take me, if I meant it thus!

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7 *Woo 't* = wilt.
33 *yield you* = reward you.

Grace grow where those drops fall! My hearty friends,
You take me in too dolorous a sense;
For I spake to you for your comfort; did desire you
To burn this night with torches: know, my hearts,
I hope well of to-morrow; and will lead you
Where rather I 'll expect victorious life
Than death and honour. Let 's to supper, come,
And drown consideration. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *The same. Before the palace.*

Enter two Soldiers *to their guard.*

First Sold. Brother, good night: to-morrow is the day.
Sec. Sold. It will determine one way: fare you well.
Heard you of nothing strange about the streets?
First Sold. Nothing. What news?
Sec. Sold. Belike 't is but a rumour. Good night to you.
First Sold. Well, sir, good night.

Enter two other Soldiers.

Sec. Sold. Soldiers, have careful watch.
Third Sold. And you. Good night, good night.
[*They place themselves in every corner of the stage.*
Fourth Sold. Here we: and if to-morrow
Our navy thrive, I have an absolute hope
Our landmen will stand up.
Third Sold. 'T is a brave army,
And full of purpose. [*Music of the hautboys as under the stage.*
Fourth Sold. Peace! what noise?
First Sold. List, list!
Sec. Sold. Hark!
First Sold. Music i' th' air.
Third Sold. Under the earth.
Fourth Sold. It signs well, does it not?
Third Sold. No.
First Sold. Peace, I say!
What should this mean?
Sec. Sold. 'T is the god Hercules, whom Antony lov'd,
Now leaves him.
First Sold. Walk; let 's see if other watchmen
Do hear what we do. [*They advance to another post.*
Sec. Sold. How now, masters!
All. [*Speaking together.*] How now!
How now! do you hear this?
First Sold. Ay; is 't not strange?

---

13 *Music i' th' air:* no poetical invention. S. found the incident, with the beautiful fancy about Hercules, recorded in *Plutarch*.

Third Sold. Do you hear, masters? do you hear?
First Sold. Follow the noise so far as we have quarter;
Let 's see how it will give off.
All. Content. 'T is strange. [*Exeunt*

SCENE IV. *The same. A room in the palace.*

Enter ANTONY *and* CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, *and others attending.*

Ant. Eros! mine armour, Eros!
Cleo. Sleep a little.
Ant. No, my chuck. Eros, come; mine armour, Eros!

Enter EROS *with armour.*

Come, good fellow, put mine iron on:
If fortune be not ours to-day, it is
Because we brave her: come.
Cleo. Nay, I 'll help too.
What 's this for?
Ant. Ah, let be, let be! thou art
The armourer of my heart: false, false; this, this.
Cleo. Sooth, la, I 'll help: thus it must be.
Ant. Well, well;
We shall thrive now. Seest thou, my good fellow?
Go put on thy defences.
Eros. Briefly, sir.
Cleo. Is not this buckled well?
Ant. Rarely, rarely:
He that unbuckles this, till we do please
To daff 't for our repose, shall hear a storm.
Thou fumblest, Eros; and my queen 's a squire
More tight at this than thou: dispatch. O love,
That thou couldst see my wars to-day, and knew'st
The royal occupation! thou shouldst see
A workman in 't.

Enter an armed Soldier.

Good morrow to thee; welcome:
Thou look'st like him that knows a warlike charge:
To business that we love we rise betime,
And go to 't with delight.
Sold. A thousand, sir,
Early though 't be, have on their riveted trim,
And at the port expect you. [*Shout. Trumpets flourish.*

Enter Captains *and* Soldiers.

Capt. The morn is fair. Good morrow, general.
All. Good morrow, general.
Ant. 'T is well blown, lads:
This morning, like the spirit of a youth

That means to be of note, begins betimes.
So, so; come, give me that: this way; well said.
Fare thee well, dame, whate'er becomes of me:
This is a soldier's kiss: rebukeable [*Kisses her.*
And worthy shameful check it were, to stand
On more mechanic compliment; I 'll leave thee
Now, like a man of steel. You that will fight,
Follow me close; I 'll bring you to 't. Adieu.
[*Exeunt Antony, Eros, Captains, and Soldiers.*

Char. Please you, retire to your chamber.
Cleo. Lead me.
He goes forth gallantly. That he and Cæsar might
Determine this great war in single fight!
Then, Antony, — but now — Well, on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Alexandria.* ANTONY'S *camp.*

Trumpets sound. Enter ANTONY *and* EROS; *a* Soldier *meeting them.*

Sold. The gods make this a happy day to Antony!
Ant. Would thou and those thy scars had once prevail'd
To make me fight at land!
Sold. Hadst thou done so,
The kings that have revolted, and the soldier
That has this morning left thee, would have still
Follow'd thy heels.
Ant. Who 's gone this morning?
Sold. Who!
One ever near thee: call for Enobarbus,
He shall not hear thee; or from Cæsar's camp
Say "I am none of thine."
Ant. What say'st thou?
Sold. Sir,
He is with Cæsar.
Eros. Sir, his chests and treasure
He has not with him.
Ant. Is he gone?
Sold. Most certain.
Ant. Go, Eros, send his treasure after; do it;
Detain no jot, I charge thee: write to him —
I will subscribe — gentle adieus and greetings;
Say that I wish he never find more cause
To change a master. O, my fortunes have
Corrupted honest men! Dispatch. — Enobarbus! [*Exeunt.*

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28 *well said* = well done.

SCENE VI. *Alexandria.* CÆSAR'S *camp.*

Flourish. Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, *with* ENOBARBUS, *and others.*

Cæs. Go forth, Agrippa, and begin the fight:
Our will is Antony be took alive;
Make it so known.
Agr. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*
Cæs. The time of universal peace is near:
Prove this a prosp'rous day, the three-nook'd world
Shall bear the olive freely.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Antony
Is come into the field.
Cæs. Go charge Agrippa
Plant those that have revolted in the van,
That Antony may seem to spend his fury
Upon himself. [*Exeunt all but Enobarbus.*
Eno. Alexas did revolt; and went to Jewry on
Affairs of Antony; there did persuade
Great Herod to incline himself to Cæsar,
And leave his master Antony: for this pains
Cæsar hath hang'd him. Canidius and the rest
That fell away have entertainment, but
No honourable trust. I have done ill;
Of which I do accuse myself so sorely,
That I will joy no more.

Enter a Soldier *of* CÆSAR'S.

Sold. Enobarbus, Antony
Hath after thee sent all thy treasure, with
His bounty overplus: the messenger
Came on my guard; and at thy tent is now
Unloading of his mules.
Eno. I give it you.
Sold. Mock not, Enobarbus.
I tell you true: best you saf'd the bringer
Out of the host; I must attend mine office,
Or would have done 't myself. Your emperor
Continues still a Jove. [*Exit.*
Eno. I am alone the villain of the earth,
And feel I am so most. O Antony,
Thou mine of bounty, how wouldst thou have paid
My better service, when my turpitude

---

6 *three-nook'd world*=Europe, Asia, and Africa, which were then the whole known world.

Thou dost so crown with gold! This blows my heart:
If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean
Shall outstrike thought: but thought will do 't, I feel.
I fight against thee! No: I will go seek
Some ditch wherein to die; the foul'st best fits
My latter part of life. *[Exit.*

SCENE VII. *Field of battle between the camps.*

Alarum. Drums and trumpets. Enter AGRIPPA *and others.*

Agr. Retire, we have engag'd ourselves too far:
Cæsar himself has work, and our oppression
Exceeds what we expected. *[Exeunt.*

Alarums. Enter ANTONY, *and* SCARUS *wounded.*

Scar. O my brave emperor, this is fought indeed!
Had we done so at first, we had droven them home
With clouts about their heads.
Ant. Thou bleed'st apace.
Scar. I had a wound here that was like a T,
But now 't is made an H.
Ant. They do retire.
Scar. We 'll beat 'em into bench-holes: I have yet
Room for six scotches more.

Enter EROS.

Eros. They are beaten, sir; and our advantage serves
For a fair victory.
Scar. Let us score their backs,
And snatch 'em up, as we take hares, behind:
'T is sport to maul a runner.
Ant. I will reward thee
Once for thy spritely comfort, and ten-fold
For thy good valour. Come thee on.
Scar. I 'll halt after. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *Under the walls of Alexandria.*

Alarum. Enter ANTONY, *in a march;* SCARUS, *with others.*

Ant. We have beat him to his camp: run one before,
And let the Queen know of our gests. To-morrow,
Before the sun shall see 's, we 'll spill the blood
That has to-day escap'd. I thank you all;
For doughty-handed are you, and have fought
Not as you serv'd the cause, but as 't had been

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[34] *blows my heart* = smites my heart; *blows* being here like *safed*, just above, one of S.'s reckless word-makings.
[5] *droven:* not Elizabethan "grammar;" mere heedlessness
[8] *an H* = an ache; so pronounced.
[2] *gests* = doings, action.

Each man's like mine; you have shown all Hectors.
Enter the city, clip your wives, your friends,
Tell them your feats; whilst they with joyful tears
Wash the congealment from your wounds, and kiss
The honour'd gashes whole. [*To Scarus.*] Give me thy hand;

Enter CLEOPATRA, *attended.*

To this great fairy I 'll commend thy acts,
Make her thanks bless thee. [*To Cleo.*] O thou day o' th' world,
Chain mine arm'd neck; leap thou, attire and all,
Through proof of harness to my heart, and there
Ride on the pants triumphing!
Cleo. Lord of lords!
O infinite virtue, com'st thou smiling from
The world's great snare uncaught?
Ant. My nightingale,
We have beat them to their beds. What, girl! though grey
Do something mingle with our younger brown, yet ha' we
A brain that nourishes our nerves, and can
Get goal for goal of youth. Behold this man;
Commend unto his lips thy favouring hand:
Kiss it, my warrior: he hath fought to-day
As if a god, in hate of mankind, had
Destroy'd in such a shape.
Cleo. I 'll give thee, friend,
An armour all of gold; it was a king's.
Ant. He has deserv'd it, were it carbuncled
Like holy Phœbus' car. Give me thy hand:
Through Alexandria make a jolly march;
Bear our hack'd targets like the men that owe them:
Had our great palace the capacity
To camp this host, we all would sup together,
And drink carouses to the next day's fate,
Which promises royal peril. Trumpeters,
With brazen din blast you the city's ear;
Make mingle with our rattling tabourines;
That heaven and earth may strike their sounds together,
Applauding our approach. [*Exeunt*

SCENE IX. CÆSAR'S *camp.*

Sentinels *at their post.*

First Sold. If we be not reliev'd within this hour,
We must return to th' court of guard: the night

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[8] *clip* = embrace.
[37] *tabourines* = small drums.

Is shiny; and they say we shall embattle
By the second hour i' th' morn.
Sec. Sold. This last day was
A shrewd one to 's.

Enter Enobarbus.

Eno. O, bear me witness, night,—
Third Sold. What man is this?
Sec. Sold. Stand close, and list him.
Eno. Be witness to me, O thou blessed moon,
When men revolted shall upon record
Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did
Before thy face repent!
First Sold. Enobarbus!
Third Sold. Peace!
Hark further.
Eno. O sovereign mistress of true melancholy,
The poisonous damp of night disponge upon me,
That life, a very rebel to my will,
May hang no longer on me: throw my heart
Against the flint and hardness of my fault;
Which, being dried with grief, will break to powder,
And finish all foul thoughts. O Antony,
Nobler than my revolt is infamous,
Forgive me in thine own particular;
But let the world rank me in register
A master-leaver and a fugitive:
O Antony! O Antony! [*Dies.*
Sec. Sold. Let 's speak
To him.
First Sold. Let 's hear him, for the things he speaks
May concern Cæsar.
Third Sold. Let 's do so. But he sleeps.
First Sold. Swoons rather; for so bad a prayer as his
Was never yet for sleep.
Sec. Sold. Go we to him.
Third Sold. Awake, sir, awake; speak to us.
Sec. Sold. Hear you, sir?
First Sold. The hand of death hath raught him. [*Drums afar off.*] Hark! the drums
Demurely wake the sleepers. Let us bear him
To the court of guard; he is of note: our hour
Is fully out.
Third Sold. Come on, then;
He may recover yet. [*Exeunt with the body.*

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30 *raught* = reached.

31 *Demurely* has been supposed to be a corruption; erroneously, I am sure. It is used to express the subdued sound of the distant drum: *demure* = modest, reserved.

Scene X. *Between the two camps.*

Enter Antony *and* Scarus, *with their Army.*

Ant. Their preparation is to-day by sea;
We please them not by land.
Scar. For both, my lord.
Ant. I would they 'ld fight i' th' fire or i' th' air;
We 'ld fight there too. But this it is; our foot
Upon the hills adjoining to the city
Shall stay with us: order for sea is given;
They have put forth the haven. [Go we up]
Where their appointment we may best discover,
And look on their endeavour. [*Exeunt.*

Scene XI. *Another part of the same.*

Enter Cæsar, *and his Army.*

Cæs. But being charg'd, we will be still by land,
Which, as I take 't, we shall; for his best force
Is forth to man his galleys. To the vales,
And hold our best advantage. [*Exeunt.*

Scene XII. *Another part of the same.*

Enter Antony *and* Scarus.

Ant. Yet they are not join'd: where yond pine does stand,
I shall discover all: I 'll bring thee word
Straight, how 't is like to go. [*Exit.*
Scar. Swallows have built
In Cleopatra's sails their nests: the augurers
Say they know not, they cannot tell; look grimly,
And dare not speak their knowledge. Antony
Is valiant, and dejected; and, by starts,
His fretted fortunes give him hope, and fear,
Of what he has, and has not. [*Alarum afar off, as at a sea-fight.*

Re-enter Antony.

Ant. All is lost;
This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me:
My fleet hath yielded to the foe; and yonder
They cast their caps up and carouse together
Like friends long lost. Triple-turn'd whore! 't is thou
Hast sold me to this novice; and my heart

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[7] *Go we up.* Here there is a hiatus in the folio text, which must be filled. In doing this I have been guided by the corresponding passage in North's *Plutarch.*

[13] *Triple turn'd*, etc. Antony alludes, with somewhat ungrateful particularity, to Cæsar, Pompey, and himself; and yet he fell short of the full tale.

Makes only wars on thee. Bid them all fly;
For when I am reveng'd upon my charm,
I have done all. Bid them all fly; begone. [*Exit Scarus.*
O sun, thy uprise shall I see no more:
Fortune and Antony part here; even here
Do we shake hands. All come to this? The hearts
That spaniel'd me at heels, to whom I gave
Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets
On blossoming Cæsar; and this pine is bark'd,
That overtopp'd them all. Betray'd I am:
O this false soul of Egypt! this grave charm,—
Whose eye beck'd forth my wars, and call'd them home;
Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,—
Like a right gipsy, hath, at fast and loose,
Beguil'd me to the very heart of loss.
What, Eros, Eros!

Enter Cleopatra.

Ah, thou spell! Avaunt!
Cleo. Why is my lord enrag'd against his love?
Ant. Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving,
And blemish Cæsar's triumph. Let him take thee,
And hoist thee up to the shouting plebeians:
Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot
Of all thy sex; most monster-like, be shown
For poor'st diminutives, for doits; and let
Patient Octavia plough thy visage up
With her prepared nails. [*Exit Cleopatra.*
'T is well thou 'rt gone,
If it be well to live; but better 't were
Thou fell'st into my fury, for one death
Might have prevented many. Eros, ho!
The shirt of Nessus is upon me: teach me,
Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage:
Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o' th' moon;
And with those hands, that grasp'd the heaviest club
Subdue my worthiest self. The witch shall die:
To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and I fall
Under this plot; she dies for 't. Eros, ho! [*Exit.*

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[37] *doits* = the smallest coin.

[44] *Alcides* = Hercules, from whom Antony claimed descent, and who threw into the sea his servant, Lichas, who brought him Nessus' poisoned shirt from Dejanira.

Scene XIII. *Alexandria.* Cleopatra's *palace.*

Enter Cleopatra, Charmian, Iras, *and* Mardian.

Cleo. Help me, my women! O, he is more mad
Than Telamon for his shield; the boar of Thessaly
Was never so emboss'd.
Char. To the monument!
There lock yourself, and send him word you are dead.
The soul and body rive not more in parting
Than greatness going off.
Cleo. To the monument!
Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself;
Say, that the last I spoke was "Antony,"
And word it, prithee, piteously: hence, Mardian,
And bring me how he takes my death. To the monument!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene XIV. *The same. Another room.*

Enter Antony *and* Eros.

Ant. Eros, thou yet behold'st me?
Eros. Ay, noble lord.
Ant. Sometime we see a cloud that 's dragonish;
A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,
A tower'd citadel, a pendent rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon 't, that nod unto the world,
And mock our eyes with air: thou hast seen these signs;
They are black vesper's pageants.
Eros. Ay, my lord.
Ant. That which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct,
As water is in water.
Eros. It does, my lord.
Ant. My good knave Eros, now thy captain is
Even such a body: here I am Antony;
Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.
I made these wars for Egypt: and the Queen,—
Whose heart I thought I had, for she had mine;
Which whilst it was mine had annex'd unto 't
A million more, now lost,—she, Eros, has
Pack'd cards with Cæsar, and false-play'd my glory
Unto an enemy's triumph.

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[2] *Telamon* = Ajax, who went mad about the armor of Achilles.
[3] *emboss'd* = blown and foaming.

Nay, weep not, gentle Eros; there is left us
Ourselves to end ourselves.

Enter MARDIAN.

O, thy vile lady!
She has robb'd me of my sword.
Mar. No, Antony;
My mistress lov'd thee, and her fortunes mingled
With thine entirely.
Ant. Hence, saucy eunuch; peace!
She hath betray'd me and shall die the death.
Mar. Death of one person can be paid but once,
And that she has discharg'd: what thou wouldst do
Is done unto thy hand: the last she spake
Was "Antony! most noble Antony!"
Then in the midst a tearing groan did break
The name of Antony; it was divided
Between her heart and lips: she render'd life,
Thy name so buried in her.
Ant. Dead, then?
Mar. Dead.
Ant. Unarm, Eros; the long day's task is done,
And we must sleep. [*To Mar.*] That thou depart'st hence safe,
Does pay thy labour richly; go. [*Exit Mardian.*
Off, pluck off:
The seven-fold shield of Ajax cannot keep
The battery from my heart. O, cleave, my sides!
Heart, once be stronger than thy continent,
Crack thy frail case! Apace, Eros, apace.
No more a soldier: bruised pieces, go;
You have been nobly borne. From me awhile. [*Exit Eros.*
I will o'ertake thee, Cleopatra, and
Weep for my pardon. So it must be, for now
All length is torture: since the torch is out,
Lie down, and stray no farther: now all labour
Mars what it does; yea, very force entangles
Itself with strength: seal then, and all is done.
Eros!—I come, my queen:—Eros!—Stay for me:
Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze:
Dido and her Æneas shall want troops,
And all the haunt be ours. Come, Eros, Eros!

Re-enter EROS.

Eros. What would my lord?
Ant. Since Cleopatra died,
I have liv'd in such dishonour, that the gods

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40 *thy continent* = that which contains thee.

Detest my baseness. I, that with my sword
Quarter'd the world, and o'er green Neptune's back
With ships made cities, condemn myself to lack
The courage of a woman; less noble mind
Than she which by her death our Cæsar tells
"I am conqueror of myself." Thou art sworn, Eros,
That, when the exigent should come, which now
Is come indeed, when I should see behind me
The inevitable prosecution of
Disgrace and horror, that, on my command,
Thou then wouldst kill me: do 't; the time is come:
Thou strik'st not me, 't is Cæsar thou defeat'st.
Put colour in thy cheek.
Eros. The gods withhold me!
Shall I do that which all the Parthian darts,
Though enemy, lost aim, and could not?
Ant. Eros,
Wouldst thou be window'd in great Rome and see
Thy master thus with pleach'd arms, bending down
His corrigible neck, his face subdu'd
To penetrative shame, whilst the wheel'd seat
Of fortunate Cæsar, drawn before him, branded
His baseness that ensued?
Eros. I would not see 't.
Ant. Come, then; for with a wound I must be cur'd.
Draw that thy honest sword, which thou hast worn
Most useful for thy country.
Eros. O, sir, pardon me!
Ant. When I did make thee free, swor'st thou not then
To do this when I bade thee? Do it at once;
Or thy precedent services are all
But accidents unpurpos'd. Draw, and come.
Eros. Turn from me, then, that noble countenance,
Wherein the worship of the whole world lies.
Ant. Lo thee! [*Turning from him.*
Eros. My sword is drawn.
Ant. Then let it do at once
The thing why thou hast drawn it.
Eros. My dear master,
My captain, and my emperor, let me say,
Before I strike this bloody stroke, farewell.
Ant. 'T is said, man; and farewell.
Eros. Farewell, great chief. Shall I strike now?
Ant. Now, Eros.
Eros. Why, there then: thus I do escape the sorrow
Of Antony's death. [*Kills himself.*

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73 *pleach'd* = close entwined.

Ant. Thrice-nobler than myself!
Thou teachest me, O valiant Eros, what
I should, and thou couldst not. My queen and Eros
Have by their brave instruction got upon me
A nobleness in record: but I will be
A bridegroom in my death, and run into 't
As to a lover's bed. Come, then; and, Eros,
Thy master dies thy scholar: to do thus [*Falling on his sword.*
I learn'd of thee. How! not dead? not dead?
The guard, ho! O, dispatch me!

Enter DERCETAS *and* Guard.

First Guard. What 's the noise?
Ant. I have done my work ill, friends: O, make an end
Of what I have begun.
Sec. Guard. The star is fall'n.
First Guard. And time is at his period.
All. Alas, and woe!
Ant. Let him that loves me strike me dead.
First Guard. Not I.
Sec. Guard. Nor I.
Third Guard. Nor any one. [*Exeunt Guard.*
Der. Thy death and fortunes bid thy followers fly.
This sword but shown to Cæsar, with this tidings,
Shall enter me with him.

Enter DIOMEDES.

Dio. Where 's Antony?
Der. There, Diomed, there.
Dio. Lives he?
Wilt thou not answer, man? [*Exit Dercetas.*
Ant. Art thou there, Diomed? Draw thy sword, and give me
Sufficing strokes for death.
Dio. Most absolute lord,
My mistress Cleopatra sent me to thee.
Ant. When did she send thee?
Dio. Now, my lord.
Ant. Where is she?
Dio. Lock'd in her monument. She had a prophesying fear
Of what hath come to pass: for when she saw —
Which never shall be found — you did suspect
She had dispos'd with Cæsar, and that your rage
Would not be purg'd, she sent you word she was dead;
But, fearing since how it might work, hath sent
Me to proclaim the truth; and I am come,
I dread, too late.
Ant. Too late, good Diomed: call my guard, I prithee.
Dio. What, ho, the Emperor's guard! The guard, what, ho!
Come, your lord calls!

Enter four or five of the Guard *of* Antony.

Ant. Bear me, good friends, where Cleopatra bides;
'T is the last service that I shall command you.
First Guard. Woe, woe are we, sir, you may not live to wear
All your true followers out.
All. Most heavy day!
Ant. Nay, good my fellows, do not please sharp fate
To grace it with your sorrows: bid that welcome
Which comes to punish us, and we punish it
Seeming to bear it lightly. Take me up:
I have led you oft: carry me now, good friends,
And have my thanks for all. [*Exeunt, bearing Antony.*

Scene XV. *The same. A monument.*

Enter Cleopatra, *and her maids aloft, with* Charmian *and* Iras.

Cleo. O Charmian, I will never go from hence.
Char. Be comforted, dear madam.
Cleo. No, I will not:
All strange and terrible events are welcome,
But comforts we despise; our size of sorrow,
Proportion'd to our cause, must be as great
As that which makes it.

Enter, below, Diomedes.

How now! is he dead?
Dio. His death 's upon him, but not dead.
Look out o' th' other side your monument;
His guard have brought him thither.

Enter, below, Antony, *borne by the* Guard.

Cleo. O sun,
Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in! darkling stand
The varying shore o' th' world. O Antony,
Antony, Antony! Help, Charmian, help, Iras, help;
Help, friends below; let 's draw him hither.
Ant. Peace!
Not Cæsar's valour hath o'erthrown Antony,
But Antony's hath triumph'd on itself.
Cleo. So it should be, that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony; but woe 't is so!
Ant. I am dying, Egypt, dying; only
I here importune death awhile, until
Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips.
Cleo. I dare not, dear, —
Dear my lord, pardon, — I dare not,

Lest I be taken: not the imperious show
Of the full-fortun'd Cæsar ever shall
Be brooch'd with me; if knife, drugs, serpents, have
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe:
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honour
Demuring upon me. But come, come, Antony, —
Help me, my women, — we must draw thee up:
Assist, good friends.
Ant. O, quick, or I am gone.
Cleo. Here 's sport indeed! How heavy weighs my lord!
Our strength is all gone into heaviness,
That makes the weight: had I great Juno's power,
The strong-wing'd Mercury should fetch thee up,
And set thee by Jove's side. Yet come a little, —
Wishers were ever fools, — O, come, come, come;
[*They heave Antony aloft to Cleopatra.*
And welcome, welcome! die where thou hast lived:
Quicken with kissing: had my lips that power,
Thus would I wear them out.
All. A heavy sight!
Ant. I am dying, Egypt, dying:
Give me some wine, and let me speak a little.
Cleo. No, let me speak; and let me rail so high,
That the false housewife Fortune break her wheel,
Provok'd by my offence.
Ant. One word, sweet queen:
Of Cæsar seek your honour, with your safety. O!
Cleo. They do not go together.
Ant. Gentle, hear me:
None about Cæsar trust but Proculeius.
Cleo. My resolution and my hands I 'll trust;
None about Cæsar.
Ant. The miserable change now at my end
Lament nor sorrow at; but please your thoughts
In feeding them with those my former fortunes
Wherein I liv'd, the greatest prince o' th' world,
The noblest; and do now not basely die,
Not cowardly put off my helmet to
My countryman, — a Roman by a Roman
Valiantly vanquish'd. Now my spirit is going;
I can no more.
Cleo. Noblest of men, woo 't die?
Hast thou no care of me? shall I abide
In this dull world, which in thy absence is

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44 *housewife:* pronounced *husif* = hussy.

No better than a sty? O, see, my women, [*Antony dies.*
The crown o' th' earth doth melt. My lord!
O, wither'd is the garland of the war,
The soldier's pole is fall'n: young boys and girls
Are level now with men; the odds is gone,
And there is nothing left remarkable
Beneath the visiting moon. [*Faints*
Char. O, quietness, lady!
Iras. She is dead too, our sovereign.
Char. Lady!
Iras. Madam!
Char. O madam, madam, madam!
Iras. Royal Egypt,
Empress!
Char. Peace, peace, Iras!
Cleo. No more; but e'en a woman, and commanded
By such poor passion as the maid that milks
And does the meanest chares. It were for me
To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods;
To tell them that this world did equal theirs
Till they had stol'n our jewel. All 's but naught;
Patience is sottish, and impatience does
Become a dog that 's mad: then is it sin
To rush into the secret house of death,
Ere death dare come to us? How do you, women?
What, what! good cheer! Why, how now, Charmian!
My noble girls! Ah, women, women, look,
Our lamp is spent, it 's out! Good sirs, take heart:
We 'll bury him; and then, what 's brave, what 's noble,
Let 's do it after the high Roman fashion,
And make death proud to take us. Come, away:
This case of that huge spirit now is cold:
Ah, women, women! come; we have no friend
But resolution, and the briefest end.
[*Exeunt; those above bearing off Antony's body.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Alexandria.* CÆSAR'S *camp.*

Enter CÆSAR, AGRIPPA, DOLABELLA, MECÆNAS, GALLUS, PROCULEIUS, *and others, his council of war.*

Cæs. Go to him, Dolabella, bid him yield;
Being so frustrate, tell him he mocks
The pauses that he makes.

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[67] *remarkable* was not a commonplace word in S.'s time, but of very grave import.

Dol. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*

Enter, DERCETAS *with the sword of* ANTONY.

Cæs. Wherefore is that? and what art thou that dar'st
Appear thus to us?
Der. I am call'd Dercetas;
Mark Antony I serv'd, who best was worthy
Best to be serv'd: whilst he stood up and spoke,
He was my master; and I wore my life
To spend upon his haters. If thou please
To take me to thee, as I was to him
I'll be to Cæsar; if thou pleasest not,
I yield thee up my life.
Cæs. What is't thou say'st?
Der. I say, O Cæsar, Antony is dead.
Cæs. The breaking of so great a thing should make
A greater crack: the wounded world
Should have shook lions into civil streets,
And citizens to their dens: the death of Antony
Is not a single doom; in the name lay
A moiety of the world.
Der. He is dead, Cæsar;
Not by a public minister of justice,
Nor by a hired knife; but that self hand,
Which writ his honour in the acts it did,
Hath, with the courage which the heart did lend it
Splitted the heart. This is his sword;
I robb'd his wound of it; behold it stain'd
With his most noble blood.
Cæs. Look you sad, friends?
The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings
To wash the eyes of kings.
Agr. And strange it is,
That nature must compel us to lament
Our most persisted deeds.
Mec. His taints and honours
Waged equal with him.
Agr. A rarer spirit never
Did steer humanity: but you, gods, will give us
Some faults to make us men. Cæsar is touch'd.
Mec. When such a spacious mirror 's set before him,
He needs must see himself.

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[14] *The breaking of so great a thing*, etc. This magnanimity is no conception of S.'s, who found recorded in North's *Plutarch* both the generous appreciation of his rival by Octavius and the noble grief which are so beautifully expressed in this and the few following speeches.

[15] *the wounded world.* The folio, "the round world," which has hitherto been retained, although it leaves the line halting equally in sense and rhythm.

Cæs. O Antony!
I have follow'd thee to this; but we do lance
Diseases in our bodies: I must perforce
Have shown to thee such a declining day,
Or look on thine; we could not stall together
In the whole world: but yet let me lament,
With tears as sovereign as the blood of hearts,
That thou, my brother, my competitor
In top of all design, my mate in empire,
Friend and companion in the front of war,
The arm of mine own body, and the heart
Where mine his thoughts did kindle, — that our stars,
Unreconciliable, should divide
Our equalness to this. Hear me, good friends, —
But I will tell you at some meeter season:

Enter an Egyptian.

The business of this man looks out of him;
We 'll hear him what he says. Whence are you?
Egyp. A poor Egyptian yet. The Queen my mistress,
Confined in all she has, her monument,
Of thy intents desires instruction,
That she preparedly may frame herself
To the way she 's forc'd to.
Cæs. Bid her have good heart:
She soon shall know of us, by some of ours,
How honourably and how kindly we
Determine for her; for Cæsar cannot live
To be ungentle.
Egyp. So the gods preserve thee! [*Exit.*
Cæs. Come hither, Proculeius. Go and say,
We purpose her no shame: give her what comforts
The quality of her passion shall require,
Lest, in her greatness, by some mortal stroke
She do defeat us; for her life in Rome
Would be eternal in our triumph: go,
And with your speediest bring us what she says,
And how you find of her.
Pro. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*
Cæs. Gallus, go you along. [*Exit Gallus.*] Where 's Dolabella,
To second Proculeius?
All. Dolabella!
Cæs. Let him alone, for I remember now
How he 's employ'd: he shall in time be ready.

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[36] *we do lance.* The folio, we do *launch;* a mere phonetic spelling; *s* and *c* soft before a vowel had generally the sound of *sh.* or *ch* soft.

Go with me to my tent; where you shall see
How hardly I was drawn into this war;
How calm and gentle I proceeded still
In all my writings: go with me, and see
What I can show in this. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Alexandria. A room in the monument.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, *and* IRAS.

Cleo. My desolation does begin to make
A better life. 'T is paltry to be Cæsar;
Not being Fortune, he 's but Fortune's knave,
A minister of her will: and it is great
To do that thing that ends all other deeds;
Which shackles accidents and bolts up change;
Which sleeps, and never palates more the dung,
The beggar's nurse and Cæsar's.

Enter, to the gates of the monument, PROCULEIUS, GALLUS, *and* Soldiers.

Pro. Cæsar sends greeting to the Queen of Egypt;
And bids thee study on what fair demands
Thou mean'st to have him grant thee.
Cleo. What 's thy name?
Pro. My name is Proculeius.
Cleo. Antony
Did tell me of you, bade me trust you; but
I do not greatly care to be deceiv'd,
That have no use for trusting. If your master
Would have a queen his beggar, you must tell him,
That majesty, to keep decorum, must
No less beg than a kingdom: if he please
To give me conquer'd Egypt for my son,
He gives me so much of mine own, as I
Will kneel to him with thanks.
Pro. Be of good cheer;
You 're fall'n into a princely hand, fear nothing:
Make your full reference freely to my lord,
Who is so full of grace, that it flows over
On all that need: let me report to him
Your sweet dependency; and you shall find
A conqueror that will pray in aid for kindness,
Where he for grace is kneel'd to.
Cleo. Pray you, tell him
I am his fortune's vassal, and I send him
The greatness he has got. I hourly learn
A doctrine of obedience; and would gladly
Look him i' th' face.

Pro. This I 'll report, dear lady.
Have comfort, for I know your plight is pitied
Of him that caused it.
Gal. You see how easily she may be surprised:

[*Here Proculeius and two of the Guard ascend the monument by a ladder placed against a window, and, having descended, come behind Cleopatra. Some of the Guard unbar and open the gates.*

[*To Proculeius and the Guard.*] Guard her till Cæsar come.
[*Exit.*

Iras. Royal queen!
Char. O Cleopatra! thou art taken, queen.
Cleo. Quick, quick, good hands. [*Drawing a dagger.*
Pro. Hold, worthy lady, hold:
[*Seizes and disarms her.*
Do not yourself such wrong, who are in this
Reliev'd, but not betray'd.
Cleo. What, of death too,
That rids our dogs of languish?
Pro. Cleopatra,
Do not abuse my master's bounty by
The undoing of yourself: let the world see
His nobleness well acted, which your death
Will never let come forth.
Cleo. Where art thou, death?
Come hither, come! come, come, and take a queen
Worth many babes and beggars!
Pro. O, temperance, lady!
Cleo. Sir, I will eat no meat, I 'll not drink, sir;
If idle talk will once be necessary,
I 'll not sleep neither: this mortal house I 'll ruin,
Do Cæsar what he can. Know, sir, that I
Will not wait pinion'd at your master's court;
Nor once be chastised with the sober eye
Of dull Octavia. Shall they hoist me up
And show me to the shouting varletry
Of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt
Be gentle grave unto me! rather on Nilus' mud
Lay me stark-nak'd, and let the water-flies
Blow me into abhorring! rather make
My country's high pyramides my gibbet,
And hang me up in chains!
Pro. You do extend
These thoughts of horror further than you shall
Find cause in Cæsar.

Enter Dolabella.

Dol. Proculeius,

What thou hast done thy master Cæsar knows,
And he hath sent for thee: for the Queen,
I 'll take her to my guard.
Pro. So, Dolabella,
It shall content me best: be gentle to her.
[*To Cleo.*] To Cæsar I will speak what you shall please,
If you 'll employ me to him.
Cleo. Say, I would die.
[*Exeunt Proculeius and Soldiers.*
Dol. Most noble empress, you have heard of me?
Cleo. I cannot tell.
Dol. Assuredly you know me.
Cleo. No matter, sir, what I have heard or known.
You laugh when boys or women tell their dreams;
Is 't not your trick?
Dol. I understand not, madam.
Cleo. I dream'd there was an Emperor Antony:
O, such another sleep, that I might see
But such another man!
Dol. If it might please ye, —
Cleo. His face was as the heavens; and therein stuck
A sun and moon, which kept their course, and lighted
The little O, the earth.
Dol. Most sovereign creature, —
Cleo. His legs bestrid the ocean: his rear'd arm
Crested the world: his voice was propertied
As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends;
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
There was no winter in 't; an autumn 't was
That grew the more by reaping; his delights
Were dolphin-like; they show'd his back above
The element they lived in: in his livery
Walk'd crowns and crownets; realms and islands were
As plates dropp'd from his pocket.
Dol. Cleopatra!
Cleo. Think you there was, or might be, such a man
As this I dream'd of?
Dol. Gentle madam, no.
Cleo. You lie, up to the hearing of the gods.
But, if there be, or ever were, one such,
It 's past the size of dreaming: nature wants stuff
To vie strange forms with fancy; yet, to imagine
An Antony, were nature's piece 'gainst fancy,
Condemning shadows quite.

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92 *plates* = pieces of money.

Dol. Hear me, good madam.
Your loss is as yourself, great; and you bear it
As answering to the weight: would I might never
O'ertake pursu'd success, but I do feel,
By the rebound of yours, a grief that shoots
My very heart at root.
Cleo. I thank you, sir.
Know you what Cæsar means to do with me?
Dol. I am loath to tell you what I would you knew.
Cleo. Nay, pray you, sir, —
Dol. Though he be honourable, —
Cleo. He 'll lead me, then, in triumph?
Dol. Madam, he will; I know 't.
[*Flourish, and shout within,* "Make way there: Cæsar!"
Enter Cæsar, Gallus, Proculeius, Mecænas, Seleucus, *and others of his Train.*
Cæs. Which is the Queen of Egypt?
Dol. It is the Emperor, madam. [*Cleopatra kneels.*
Cæs. Arise, you shall not kneel:
I pray you, rise; rise, Egypt.
Cleo. Sir, the gods
Will have it thus; my master and my lord
I must obey.
Cæs. Take to you no hard thoughts:
The record of what injuries you did us,
Though written in our flesh, we shall remember
As things but done by chance.
Cleo. Sole sir o' th' world,
I cannot project mine own cause so well
To make it clear; but do confess I have
Been laden with like frailties which before
Have often sham'd our sex.
Cæs. Cleopatra, know,
We will extenuate rather than enforce:
If you apply yourself to our intents,
Which towards you are most gentle, you shall find
A benefit in this change; but if you seek
To lay on me a cruelty, by taking
Antony's course, you shall bereave yourself
Of my good purposes, and put your children
To that destruction which I 'll guard them from,
If thereon you rely. I 'll take my leave.
Cleo. And may, through all the world: 't is yours; and we,
Your scutcheons and your signs of conquest, shall
Hang in what place you please. Here, my good lord.

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104 *shoots.* The folio *suits*, a mere phonetic irregularity; *suits* having been pronounced *shoots.*
120 *project:* accented on the first syllable.

Cæs. You shall advise me in all for Cleopatra.
Cleo. This is the brief of money, plate, and jewels,
I am possess'd of: 't is exactly valued;
Not petty things admitted. Where 's Seleucus?
Sel. Here, madam.
Cleo. This is my treasurer: let him speak, my lord,
Upon his peril, that I have reserv'd
To myself nothing. Speak the truth, Seleucus.
Sel. Madam,
I had rather seal my lips, than, to my peril,
Speak that which is not.
Cleo. What have I kept back?
Sel. Enough to purchase what you have made known.
Cæs. Nay, blush not, Cleopatra; I approve
Your wisdom in the deed.
Cleo. See, Cæsar! O, behold,
How pomp is follow'd! mine will now be yours;
And, should we shift estates, yours would be mine.
Th' ingratitude of this Seleucus does
Even make me wild: O slave, of no more trust
Than love that 's hir'd! What, goest thou back? thou shalt
Go back, I warrant thee; but I 'll catch thine eyes,
Though they had wings: slave, soulless villain, dog!
O rarely base!
Cæs. Good queen, let us entreat you.
Cleo. O Cæsar, what a wounding shame is this,
That thou, vouchsafing here to visit me,
Doing the honour of thy lordliness
To one so meek, that mine own servant should
Parcel the sum of my disgraces by
Addition of his envy! Say, good Cæsar,
That I some lady trifles have reserv'd,
Immoment toys, things of such dignity
As we greet modern friends withal; and say,
Some nobler token I have kept apart
For Livia and Octavia, to induce
Their mediation; must I be unfolded
With one that I have bred? The gods! it smites me
Beneath the fall I have. [*To Seleucus.*] Prithee, go hence;
Or I shall show the cinders of my spirits
Through the ashes of my chance: wert thou a man,
Thou wouldst have mercy on me.
Cæs. Forbear, Seleucus. [*Exit Seleucus*

---

163 *envy* = malice.
166 *modern friends* = commonplace, unimportant friends.
174 *Forbear* means here withdraw, go: forbear our presence.

Cleo. Be it known, that we, the greatest, are misthought
For things that others do; and, when we fall,
We answer others' merits in our name,
Are therefore to be pitied.
Cæs. Cleopatra,
Not what you have reserv'd, nor what acknowledg'd,
Put we i' th' roll of conquest: still be 't yours,
Bestow it at your pleasure; and believe,
Cæsar 's no merchant, to make prize with you
Of things that merchants sold. Therefore be cheer'd;
Make not your thoughts your prisons: no, dear queen;
For we intend so to dispose you as
Yourself shall give us counsel. Feed, and sleep:
Our care and pity is so much upon you,
That we remain your friend; and so, adieu.
Cleo. My master, and my lord!
Cæs. Not so. Adieu.
[*Flourish. Exeunt Cæsar and his Train.*
Cleo. He words me, girls, he words me, that I should not
Be noble to myself: but, hark thee, Charmian.
[*Whispers Charmian.*
Iras. Finish, good lady; the bright day is done,
And we are for the dark.
Cleo. Hie thee again:
I have spoke already, and it is provided;
Go put it to the haste.
Char. Madam, I will.

Re-enter DOLABELLA.

Dol. Where is the Queen?
Char. Behold, sir. [*Exit.*
Cleo. Dolabella!
Dol. Madam, as thereto sworn by your command,
Which my love makes religion to obey,
I tell you this: Cæsar through Syria
Intends his journey; and within three days
You with your children will he send before:
Make your best use of this: I have perform'd
Your pleasure and my promise.
Cleo. Dolabella,
I shall remain your debtor.
Dol. I your servant.
Adieu, good queen; I must attend on Cæsar.
Cleo. Farewell, and thanks. [*Exit Dolabella.*
Now, Iras, what think'st thou?
Thou, an Egyptian puppet, shalt be shown
In Rome, as well as I: mechanic slaves

With greasy aprons, rules, and hammers, shall
Uplift us to the view; in their thick breaths,
Rank of gross diet, shall we be enclouded,
And forc'd to drink their vapour.
Iras. The gods forbid!
Cleo. Nay, 't is most certain, Iras: saucy lictors
Will catch at us, like strumpets; and scald rhymers
Ballad us out o' tune: the quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us, and present
Our Alexandrian revels; Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
I' th' posture of a whore.
Iras. O the good gods!
Cleo. Nay, that 's certain.
Iras. I 'll never see 't; for, I am sure, my nails
Are stronger than mine eyes.
Cleo. Why, that 's the way
To fool their preparation, and to conquer
Their most absurd intents.

Re-enter CHARMIAN.

Now, Charmian!
Show me, my women, like a queen: go fetch
My best attires; I am again for Cydnus,
To meet Mark Antony: sirrah Iras, go.
Now, noble Charmian, we 'll dispatch indeed;
And, when thou hast done this chare, I 'll give thee leave
To play till doomsday. Bring our crown and all.
Wherefore is this noise? [*Exit Iras. A noise within.*

Enter a Guardsman.

Guard. Here is a rural fellow
That will not be denied your highness' presence:
He brings you figs.
Cleo. Let him come in. [*Exit Guardsman.*
What poor an instrument
May do a noble deed! he brings me liberty.
My resolution 's placed, and I have nothing
Of woman in me; now from head to foot
I am marble-constant; now the fleeting moon
No planet is of mine.

Re-enter Guardsman, *with* Clown, *bringing in a basket.*

Guard. This is the man.
Cleo. Avoid, and leave him. [*Exit Guardsman.*

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[214] *scald* = scabbed; as in scald-head.
[219] *boy my greatness:* alluding to the performance of women's parts by very young men.
[228] *sirrah* was sometimes applied to women as well as to men.

Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there,
That kills and pains not?

Clown. Truly, I have him: but I would not be the party that should desire you to touch him, for his biting is immortal; those that do die of it do seldom or never recover.

Cleo. Remember'st thou any that have died on 't?

Clown. Very many, men and women too. I heard of one of them no longer than yesterday: a very honest women, but something given to lie; as a woman should not do, but in the way of honesty: how she died of the biting of it, what pain she felt: truly, she makes a very good report o' th' worm; but he that will believe all that they say, shall never be saved by half that they do: but this is most fallible, the worm 's an odd worm.

Cleo. Get thee hence; farewell.

Clown. I wish you all joy of the worm. [*Setting down his basket.*

Cleo. Farewell.

Clown. You must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind.

Cleo. Ay, ay; farewell.

Clown. Look you, the worm is not to be trusted but in the keeping of wise people; for, indeed, there is no goodness in the worm.

Cleo. Take thou no care; it shall be heeded.

Clown. Very good. Give it nothing, I pray you, for it is not worth the feeding.

Cleo. Will it eat me?

Clown. You must not think I am so simple but I know the Devil himself will not eat a woman: I know that a woman is a dish for the gods, if the Devil dress her not. But, truly, these same whoreson devils do the gods great harm in their women; for in every ten that they make, the devils mar five.

Cleo. Well, get thee gone; farewell.

Clown. Yes, forsooth: I wish you joy o' th' worm. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Iras *with a robe, crown, etc.*

Cleo. Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have
Immortal longings in me: now no more
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip:
Yare, yare, good Iras; quick. Methinks I hear
Antony call; I see him rouse himself
To praise my noble act; I hear him mock
The luck of Cæsar, which the gods give men
To excuse their after wrath; husband, I come:
Now to that name my courage prove my title!
I am fire and air; my other elements

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[242] *worm* = snake. It was an asp.
[278] *Yare* = quickly, nimbly.

I give to baser life. So; have you done?
Come then, and take the last warmth of my lips.
Farewell, kind Charmian; Iras, long farewell.
[*Kisses them. Iras falls and dies.*
Have I the aspic in my lips? Dost fall?
If thou and nature can so gently part,
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,
Which hurts, and is desir'd. Dost thou lie still?
If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world
It is not worth leave-taking.
Char. Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain; that I may say,
The gods themselves do weep!
Cleo. This proves me base:
If she first meet the curled Antony,
He 'll make demand of her, and spend that kiss
Which is my heaven to have. Come, thou mortal wretch,
[*To an asp, which she applies to her breast.*
With thy sharp teeth this knot intrinsicate
Of life at once untie: poor venomous fool,
Be angry, and dispatch. O, couldst thou speak,
That I might hear thee call great Cæsar ass
Unpolicied!
Char. O eastern star!
Cleo. Peace, peace!
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep?
Char. O, break! O, break!
Cleo. As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle, —
O Antony! — Nay, I will take thee too:
[*Applying another asp to her arm.*
What should I stay — [*Dies.*
Char. In this vile world? So, fare thee well.
Now boast thee, death, in thy possession lies
A lass unparallel'd. Downy windows, close;
And golden Phœbus never be beheld
Of eyes again so royal! Your crown's awry;
I 'll mend it, and then play.

Enter the Guard, *rushing in.*

First Guard. Where is the Queen?
Char. Speak softly, wake her not.
First Guard. Cæsar hath sent —
Char. Too slow a messenger.
[*Applies an asp.*
O, come apace, dispatch! I partly feel thee.

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299 *intrinsicate* = intricate: the word is very rare; but it was not unknown before S.'s day. See note on *intrinse*, *King Lear*, Act II. Sc. 2, line 68.

First Guard. Approach, ho! All 's not well: Cæsar's beguil'd.
Sec. Guard. There 's Dolabella sent from Cæsar; call him.
First Guard. What work is here! Charmian, is this well done?
Char. It is well done, and fitting for a princess
Descended of so many royal kings.
Ah, soldier! [*Dies.*

Re-enter DOLABELLA.

Dol. How goes it here?
Sec. Guard. All dead.
Dol. Cæsar, thy thoughts
Touch their effects in this: thyself art coming
To see perform'd the dreaded act which thou
So sought'st to hinder. [*Within* "A way there, a way for Cæsar!"

Re-enter CÆSAR *and all his train, marching.*

Dol. O sir, you are too sure an augurer;
That you did fear is done.
Cæs. Bravest at the last,
She levell'd at our purposes, and, being royal,
Took her own way. The manner of their deaths?
I do not see them bleed.
Dol. Who was last with them?
First Guard. A simple countryman, that brought her figs:
This was his basket.
Cæs. Poison'd, then.
First Guard. O Cæsar,
This Charmian liv'd but now; she stood and spake:
I found her trimming up the diadem
On her dead mistress; tremblingly she stood
And on the sudden dropp'd.
Cæs. O noble weakness!
If they had swallow'd poison, 't would appear
By external swelling: but she looks like sleep,
As she would catch another Antony
In her strong toil of grace.
Dol. Here, on her breast,
There is a vent of blood and something blown:
The like is on her arm.
First Guard. This is an aspic's trail: and these fig-leaves
Have slime upon them, such as th' aspic leaves
Upon the caves of Nile.
Cæs. Most probable
That so she died; for her physician tells me
She hath pursu'd conclusions infinite
Of easy ways to die. Take up her bed;

And bear her women from the monument:
She shall be buried by her Antony:
No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
A pair so famous. High events as these
Strike those that make them; and their story is
No less in pity than his glory which
Brought them to be lamented. Our army shall
In solemn show attend this funeral;
And then to Rome. Come, Dolabella, see
High order in this great solemnity. [*Exeunt*

CYMBELINE.

INTRODUCTION.

WHY this play should have been classed by the editors of the folio of 1623 (in which it was first printed) among Shakespeare's tragedies does not appear. Its claim to a place there is no better, or other, than that of *Measure for Measure* or *The Merchant of Venice;* and indeed in their plots and dramatic motives there is some likeness between *Cymbeline* and *Much Ado About Nothing.* It was rated as a tragedy probably because of its political and military element. For these, Shakespeare went to his usual source of inspiration on such subjects, Holinshed's *Chronicle.* But he, or some one before him, added largely to what is recorded there about the British King Cymbeline. The story of Posthumus and his wife, which is interwoven with the other so largely and so closely as to make the two almost one, is taken from the ninth novel of the second day of the *Decameron*, which had not been translated into English when *Cymbeline* was written: this was about 1609 or 1610. Its style, construction, and versification show that it was one of its writer's latest productions; and a Dr. Samuel Forman recorded in his diary a performance of it, which must have taken place in 1610 or 1611. *Cymbeline* does not rank high among Shakespeare's plays for either poetic or dramatic excellence. Its chief value, and its high distinction, is in that it presents to us the most enchanting picture of womanhood that exists in the literature of all times, tongues, and peoples. Imogen's creator himself seems to have been her lover. In style the play is notably obscure and elliptical; and, perhaps partly in consequence of this, the text has come to us in very bad condition. Some passages are quite inexplicable. In the construction of no other play has Shakespeare set probability and consistency, time, place, and physical possibility so absolutely at naught. It shows his hand throughout, except in two unimportant passages.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CYMBELINE, *King of Britain.*
CLOTEN, *son to the Queen by a former husband.*
POSTHUMUS LEONATUS, *a gentleman, husband to Imogen.*
BELARIUS, *a banished lord disguised under the name of Morgan.*
GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, *sons to Cymbeline, disguised under the name of Polydore and Cadwal, supposed sons to Morgan.*
PHILARIO, *friend to Posthumus,* IACHIMO, *friend to Philario,* *Italians.*
CAIUS LUCIUS, *general of the Roman forces.*
PISANIO, *servant to Posthumus.*
CORNELIUS, *a physician.*
A Roman Captain.
Two British Captains.
A Frenchman, friend to Philario.
Two Lords of Cymbeline's court.
Two Gentlemen of the same.
Two Gaolers.

QUEEN, *wife to Cymbeline.*
IMOGEN, *daughter to Cymbeline by a former queen.*
HELEN, *a lady attending on Imogen.*

Lords, Ladies, Roman Senators, Tribunes, a Soothsayer, a Dutchman, a Spaniard, Musicians, Officers, Captains, Soldiers, Messengers, and other Attendants.

Apparitions.

SCENE: Britain; Rome.

CYMBELINE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Britain. The garden of* CYMBELINE'S *palace.*

Enter two Gentlemen.

First Gent. You do not meet a man but frowns: our bloods
No more obey the heavens than our courtiers
Still seem as does the King.
Sec. Gent. But what's the matter?
First Gent. His daughter, and the heir of 's kingdom, whom
He purpos'd to his wife's sole son — a widow
That late he married — hath referr'd herself
Unto a poor but worthy gentleman: she's wedded;
Her husband banish'd; she imprison'd: all
Is outward sorrow; though I think the King
Be touch'd at very heart.
Sec. Gent. None but the King?
First Gent. He that hath lost her too; so is the Queen,
That most desir'd the match: but not a courtier,
Although they wear their faces to the bent
Of the King's looks, hath a heart that is not
Glad at the thing they scowl at.
Sec. Gent. And why so?
First Gent. He that hath miss'd the Princess is a thing
Too bad for bad report: and he that hath her —
I mean, that married her, alack, good man!
And therefore banish'd — is a creature such
As, to seek through the regions of the earth
For one his like, there would be something failing
In him that should compare. I do not think
So fair an outward and such stuff within
Endows a man but he.
Sec. Gent. You speak him far.
First Gent. I do extend him, sir, within himself,
Crush him together rather than unfold
His measure duly.
Sec. Gent. What's his name and birth?

First Gent. I cannot delve him to the root: his father
Was call'd Sicilius, who did gain his honour
Against the Romans with Cassibelan,
But had his titles by Tenantius whom
He serv'd with glory and admir'd success,
So gain'd the sur-addition Leonatus;
And had, besides this gentleman in question,
Two other sons, who in the wars o' th' time
Died with their swords in hand; for which their father,
Then old and fond of issue, took such sorrow
That he quit being, and his gentle lady,
Big of this gentleman our theme, deceas'd
As he was born. The King he takes the babe
To his protection, calls him Posthumus Leonatus,
Breeds him and makes him of his bed-chamber,
Puts to him all the learnings that his time
Could make him the receiver of; which he took,
As we do air, fast as 't was minister'd,
And in 's spring became a harvest; liv'd in court —
Which rare it is to do — most prais'd, most lov'd,
A sample to the youngest, to the more mature
A glass that feated them, and to the graver
A child that guided dotards; to his mistress,
For whom he now is banish'd, her own price
Proclaims how she esteem'd him and his virtue;
By her election may be truly read
What kind of man he is.
Sec. Gent. I honour him
Even out of your report. But, pray you, tell me,
Is she sole child to th' King?
First Gent. His only child.
He had two sons: if this be worth your hearing,
Mark it: the eldest of them at three years old,
I' th' swathing-clothes the other, from their nursery
Were stol'n, and to this hour no guess in knowledge
Which way they went.
Sec. Gent. How long is this ago?
First Gent. Some twenty years.
Sec. Gent. That a king's children should be so convey'd,
So slackly guarded, and the search so slow,
That could not trace them!
First Gent. Howsoe'er 't is strange,
Or that the negligence may well be laugh'd at,
Yet is it true, sir.

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[29] *gain his honour:* the folio "*join* his honour."
[49] *feated* = fashioned.

Sec. Gent. I do well believe you.
First Gent. We must forbear: here comes the gentleman,
The Queen, and Princess. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the QUEEN, POSTHUMUS, *and* IMOGEN.

Queen. No, be assur'd you shall not find me, daughter,
After the slander of most stepmothers,
Evil-eyed unto you: you 're my prisoner, but
Your gaoler shall deliver you the keys
That lock up your restraint. For you, Posthumus,
So soon as I can win the offended king,
I will be known your advocate: marry, yet
The fire of rage is in him, and 't were good
You lean'd unto his sentence with what patience
Your wisdom may inform you.
Post. Please your highness,
I will from hence to-day.
Queen. You know the peril.
I 'll fetch a turn about the garden, pitying
The pangs of barr'd affections, though the King
Hath charg'd you should not speak together. [*Exit.*
Imo. O
Dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant
Can tickle where she wounds! My dearest husband,
I something fear my father's wrath; but nothing —
Always reserv'd my holy duty — what
His rage can do on me: you must be gone;
And I shall here abide the hourly shot
Of angry eyes, not comforted to live,
But that there is this jewel in the world
That I may see again.
Post. My queen! my mistress!
O lady, weep no more, lest I give cause
To be suspected of more tenderness
Than doth become a man. I will remain
The loyal'st husband that did e'er plight troth:
My residence in Rome at one Philario's,
Who to my father was a friend, to me
Known but by letter: thither write, my queen,
And with mine eyes I 'll drink the words you send,
Though ink be made of gall.

Re-enter QUEEN.

Queen. Be brief, I pray you:
If the King come, I shall incur I know not
How much of his displeasure. [*Aside.*] Yet I 'll move him
To walk this way: I never do him wrong,

But he does buy my injuries, to be friends;
Pays dear for my offences. [*Exit.*
Post. Should we be taking leave
As long a term as yet we have to live,
The loathness to depart would grow. Adieu!
Imo. Nay, stay a little:
Were you but riding forth to air yourself,
Such parting were too petty. Look here, love;
This diamond was my mother's: take it, heart;
But keep it till you woo another wife,
When Imogen is dead.
Post. How, how! another?
You gentle gods, give me but this I have,
And cere up my embracements from a next
With bonds of death! [*Putting on the ring.*] Remain, remain thou here
While sense can keep it on. And, sweetest, fairest,
As I my poor self did exchange for you,
To your so infinite loss, so in our trifles
I still win of you: for my sake wear this;
It is a manacle of love; I 'll place it
Upon this fairest prisoner. [*Putting a bracelet upon her arm.*
Imo. O the gods!
When shall we see again?

Enter Cymbeline *and* Lords.

Post. Alack, the King!
Cym. Thou basest thing, avoid! Hence, from my sight!
If after this command thou fraught the court
With thy unworthiness, thou diest: away!
Thou 'rt poison to my blood.
Post. The gods protect you!
And bless the good remainders of the court!
I am gone. [*Exit.*
Imo. There cannot be a pinch in death
More sharp than this is.
Cym. O disloyal thing,
That shouldst repair my youth, thou heap'st
A year's age on me.
Imo. I beseech you, sir,
Harm not yourself with your vexation:
I am senseless of your wrath; a touch more rare
Subdues all pangs, all fears.
Cym. Past grace? obedience?

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[116] *cere up* = bind as with a cere-cloth, which was bound around the body before it was coffined. The folio has *sear*, a mere phonetic spelling.

[126] *fraught* = freight, load, burden.

Imo. Past hope, and in despair; that way, past grace.
Cym. That mightst have had the sole son of my queen!
Imo. O blest, that I might not! I chose an eagle,
And did avoid a puttock.
Cym. Thou took'st a beggar; wouldst have made my throne
A seat for baseness.
Imo. No; I rather added
A lustre to it.
Cym. O thou vile one!
Imo. Sir,
It is your fault that I have lov'd Posthumus:
You bred him as my playfellow, and he is
A man worth any woman; overbuys me
Almost the sum he pays.
Cym. What, art thou mad?
Imo. Almost, sir: heaven restore me! Would I were
A neat-herd's daughter, and my Leonatus
Our neighbour shepherd's son!
Cym. Thou foolish thing!

Re-enter QUEEN.

They were again together: you have done
Not after our command. Away with her,
And pen her up.
Queen. Beseech your patience. Peace,
Dear lady daughter, peace! Sweet sovereign,
Leave us to ourselves; and make yourself some comfort
Out of your best advice.
Cym. Nay, let her languish
A drop of blood a day; and, being ag'd,
Die of this folly! [*Exeunt Cymbeline and Lords.*
Queen. Fie! you must give way.

Enter PISANIO.

Here is your servant. How now, sir! What news?
Pis. My lord your son drew on my master.
Queen. Ha!
No harm, I trust, is done?
Pis. There might have been,
But that my master rather play'd than fought
And had no help of anger: they were parted
By gentlemen at hand.
Queen. I am very glad on 't.
Imo. Your son 's my father's friend; he takes his part.
To draw upon an exile! O brave sir!
I would they were in Afric both together;

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140 *puttock* = kite.
166 *O brave sir!* Not addressed to Pisanio, but a sarcasm upon Cloten.

Myself by with a needle, that I might prick
The goer-back. Why came you from your master?
Pis. On his command: he would not suffer me
To bring him to the haven; left these notes
Of what commands I should be subject to,
When 't pleas'd you to employ me.
Queen. This hath been
Your faithful servant: I dare lay mine honour
He will remain so.
Pis. I humbly thank your highness.
Queen. Pray, walk awhile.
Imo. About some half-hour hence,
I pray you, speak with me: you shall at least
Go see my lord aboard: for this time leave me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. A public place.*

Enter CLOTEN *and two* LORDS.

First Lord. Sir, I would advise you to shift a shirt; the violence of action hath made you reek as a sacrifice: where air comes out, air comes in: there 's none abroad so wholesome as that you vent.

Clo. If my shirt were bloody, then to shift it. Have I hurt him?

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] No, 'faith; not so much as his patience.

First Lord. Hurt him! his body 's a passable carcass, if he be not hurt; it is a throughfare for steel, if it be not hurt.

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] His steel was in debt; it went o' th' backside the town.

Clo. The villain would not stand me.

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] No; but he fled forward still, toward your face.

First Lord. Stand you! You have land enough of your own: but he added to your having; gave you some ground.

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] As many inches as you have oceans. Puppies!

Clo. I would they had not come between us.

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] So would I, till you had measur'd how long a fool you were upon the ground.

Clo. And that she should love this fellow and refuse me!

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] If it be a sin to make a true election, she is damn'd.

First Lord. Sir, as I told you always, her beauty and her brain go not together: she 's a good sign, but I have seen small reflection of her wit.

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] She shines not upon fools, lest the reflection should hurt her.

Clo. Come, I 'll to my chamber. Would there had been some hurt done!

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] I wish not so; unless it had been the fall of an ass, which is no great hurt.

Clo. You 'll go with us?

First Lord. I 'll attend your lordship.

Clo. Nay, come, let 's go together.

Sec. Lord. Well, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A room in* CYMBELINE'S *palace.*

Enter IMOGEN *and* PISANIO.

Imo. I would thou grew'st unto the shores o' th' haven,
And question'dst every sail. If he should write,
And I not have it, 't were a paper lost,
As offer'd mercy is. What was the last
That he spake to thee?
Pis. It was his queen, his queen!
Imo. Then wav'd his handkerchief?
Pis. And kiss'd it, madam.
Imo. Senseless linen! happier therein than I!
And that was all?
Pis. No, madam; for so long
As he could make me with this eye or ear
Distinguish him from others, he did keep
The deck, with glove, or hat, or handkerchief,
Still waving, as the fits and stirs of 's mind
Could best express how slow his soul sail'd on,
How swift his ship.
Imo. Thou shouldst have made him
As little as a crow, or less, ere left
To after-eye him.
Pis. Madam, so I did.
Imo. I would have broke mine eye-strings; crack'd them, but
To look upon him, till the diminution
Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle,
Nay, follow'd him, till he had melted from
The smallness of a gnat to air, and then
Have turn'd mine eye and wept. But, good Pisanio,
When shall we hear from him?
Pis. Be assured, madam,
With his next vantage.
Imo. I did not take my leave of him, but had
Most pretty things to say: ere I could tell him
How I would think on him at certain hours

Such thoughts and such, or I could make him swear
The shes of Italy should not betray
Mine interest and his honour, or have charg'd him,
At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight,
To encounter me with orisons, for then
I am in heaven for him; or ere I could
Give him that parting kiss which I had set
Betwixt two charming words, comes in my father
And like the tyrannous breathing of the north
Shakes all our buds from growing.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. The Queen, madam,
Desires your highness' company.
Imo. Those things I bid you do, get them dispatch'd.
I will attend the Queen.
Pis. Madam, I shall. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Rome.* PHILARIO'S *house.*

Enter PHILARIO, IACHIMO, *a* Frenchman, *a* Dutchman, *and a* Spaniard.

Iach. Believe it, sir, I have seen him in Britain: he was then of a crescent note, expected to prove so worthy as since he hath been allowed the name of; but I could then have look'd on him without the help of admiration, though the catalogue of his endowments had been tabled by his side and I to peruse him by items.

Phi. You speak of him when he was less furnish'd than now he is with that which makes him, both without and within.

French. I have seen him in France: we had very many there could behold the sun with as firm eyes as he.

Iach. This matter of marrying his king's daughter, wherein he must be weighed rather by her value than his own, words him, I doubt not, a great deal from the matter.

French. And then his banishment.

Iach. Ay, and the approbation of those that weep this lamentable divorce under her colours are wonderfully to extend him; be it but to fortify her judgement, which else an easy battery might lay flat, for taking a beggar without less quality. But how comes it he is to sojourn with you? How creeps acquaintance?

Phi. His father and I were soldiers together; to whom I

SCENE IV. The *Dutchman* and the *Spaniard* are silent. Their presence shows the mixed and vagrant company into which Posthumus comes; but like enough S. at first intended that they should say something, and thoughtlessly left them dumb.

[16] *extend* = magnify; as in Sc. 1, line 25.

[18] *without less quality.* Doubtless S. thought here that what he had written meant, with so little quality. In passages of this construction he, like many others who are not Shakespeares, was apt to fall into confusion.

have been often bound for no less than my life. Here comes the Briton: let him be so entertained amongst you as suits, with gentlemen of your knowing, to a stranger of his quality.

Enter POSTHUMUS.

I beseech you all, be better known to this gentleman; whom I commend to you as a noble friend of mine: how worthy he is I will leave to appear hereafter, rather than story him in his own hearing.

French. Sir, we have known together in Orleans.

Post. Since when I have been debtor to you for courtesies, which I will be ever to pay and yet pay still.

French. Sir, you o'er-rate my poor kindness: I was glad I did atone my countryman and you; it had been pity you should have been put together with so mortal a purpose as then each bore, upon importance of so slight and trivial a nature.

Post. By your pardon, sir, I was then a young traveller; rather shunn'd to go even with what I heard than in my every action to be guided by others' experiences: but upon my mended judgement — if I offend not to say it is mended — my quarrel was not altogether slight.

French. 'Faith, yes, to be put to the arbitrement of swords, and by such two that would by all likelihood have confounded one the other, or have fallen both.

Iach. Can we, with manners, ask what was the difference?

French. Safely, I think: 't was a contention in public, which may, without contradiction, suffer the report. It was much like an argument that fell out last night, where each of us fell in praise of our country mistresses; this gentleman at that time vouching — and upon warrant of bloody affirmation — his to be more fair, virtuous, wise, chaste, constant-qualified and less attemptable than any the rarest of our ladies in France.

Iach. That lady is not now living, or this gentleman's opinion by this worn out.

Post. She holds her virtue still, and I my mind.

Iach. You must not so far prefer her 'fore ours of Italy.

Post. Being so far provok'd as I was in France, I would abate her nothing, though I profess myself her adorer, not her friend.

Iach. As fair and as good — a kind of hand-in-hand comparison — had been something too fair and too good for any lady in Britain. If she went before others I have seen, as that diamond of yours outlustres many I have beheld, I could not but

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[33] *atone* = make at one, reconcile.

[57] *though I profess*, etc. A very unsatisfactory clause. We naturally expect *for* or *as* instead of *though*: and so *and* instead of *not*: *friend* being used to mean lover, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III. Sc. 5, line 43. Various attempts have been made to bring the text into coherence; but all in vain.

believe she excelled many: but I have not seen the most precious diamond that is, nor you the lady.

Post. I prais'd her as I rated her: so do I my stone.

Iach. What do you esteem it at?

Post. More than the world enjoys.

Iach. Either your unparagon'd mistress is dead, or she 's outpriz'd by a trifle.

Post. You are mistaken: the one may be sold, or given, if there were wealth enough for the purchase, or merit for the gift: the other is not a thing for sale, and only the gift of the gods.

Iach. Which the gods have given you?

Post. Which, by their graces, I will keep.

Iach. You may wear her in title yours: but, you know, strange fowl light upon neighbouring ponds. Your ring may be stol'n too: so your brace of unprizable estimations; the one is but frail and the other casual; a cunning thief, or a that way accomplish'd courtier, would hazard the winning both of first and last.

Post. Your Italy contains none so accomplish'd a courtier to convince the honour of my mistress, if, in the holding or loss of that, you term her frail. I do nothing doubt you have store of thieves; notwithstanding, I fear not my ring.

Phi. Let us leave here, gentlemen.

Post. Sir, with all my heart. This worthy signior, I thank him, makes no stranger of me; we are familiar at first.

Iach. With five times so much conversation, I should get ground of your fair mistress, make her go back, even to the yielding, had I admittance and opportunity to friend.

Post. No, no.

Iach. I dare thereupon pawn the moiety of my estate to your ring; which, in my opinion, o'ervalues it something: but I make my wager rather against your confidence than her reputation: and, to bar your offence herein too, I durst attempt it against any lady in the world.

Post. You are a great deal abus'd in too bold a persuasion; and I doubt not you sustain what you 're worthy of by your attempt.

Iach. What 's that?

Post. A repulse: though your attempt, as you call it, deserve more; a punishment too.

Phi. Gentlemen, enough of this: it came in too suddenly; let it die as it was born, and, I pray you, be better acquainted.

Iach. Would I had put my estate and my neighbour's on the approbation of what I have spoke!

Post. What lady would you choose to assail?

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81 *to convince* = to overcome.

Iach. Yours; whom in constancy you think stands so safe. I will lay you ten thousand ducats to your ring, that commend me to the court where your lady is, with no more advantage than the opportunity of a second conference, and I will bring from thence that honour of hers which you imagine so reserv'd.

Post. I will wage against your gold, gold to it: my ring I hold dear as my finger; 't is part of it.

Iach. You are afraid, and therein the wiser. If you buy ladies' flesh at a million a dram, you cannot preserve it from tainting: but I see you have some religion in you, that you fear.

Post. This is but a custom in your tongue; you bear a graver purpose, I hope.

Iach. I am the master of my speeches, and would undergo what 's spoken, I swear.

Post. Will you? I shall but lend my diamond till your return: let there be covenants drawn between 's: my mistress exceeds in goodness the hugeness of your unworthy thinking: I dare you to this match: here 's my ring.

Phi. I will have it no lay.

Iach. By the gods, it is one. If I bring you no sufficient testimony that I have enjoy'd the dearest bodily part of your mistress, my ten thousand ducats are yours; so is your diamond too: if I come off, and leave her in such honour as you have trust in, she your jewel, this your jewel, and my gold are yours: provided I have your commendation for my more free entertainment.

Post. I embrace these conditions; let us have articles betwixt us. Only, thus far you shall answer: if you make your voyage upon her and give me directly to understand you have prevail'd, I am no further your enemy; she is not worth our debate: if she remain unseduc'd, you not making it appear otherwise, for your ill opinion and the assault you have made to her chastity you shall answer me with your sword.

Iach. Your hand; a covenant: we will have these things set down by lawful counsel, and straight away for Britain, lest the bargain should catch cold and starve: I will fetch my gold and have our two wagers recorded.

Post. Agreed. [*Exeunt Posthumus and Iachimo.*

French. Will this hold, think you?

Phi. Signior Iachimo will not from it. Pray, let us follow 'em. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Britain. A room in* CYMBELINE'S *palace.*

Enter QUEEN, Ladies, *and* CORNELIUS.

Queen. Whiles yet the dew 's on ground, gather those flowers;
Make haste: who has the note of them?
First Lady. I, madam.
Queen. Dispatch. [*Exeunt Ladies.*
Now, master doctor, have you brought those drugs?
Cor. Pleaseth your highness, ay: here they are, madam:
[*Presenting a small box.*
But I beseech your grace, without offence,—
My conscience bids me ask—wherefore you have
Commanded of me these most poisonous compounds,
Which are the movers of a languishing death;
But though slow, deadly?
Queen. I wonder, doctor,
Thou ask'st me such a question. Have I not been
Thy pupil long? Hast thou not learn'd me how
To make perfumes? distil? preserve? yea, so
That our great king himself doth woo me oft
For my confections? Having thus far proceeded,—
Unless thou think'st me devilish—is 't not meet
That I did amplify my judgement in
Other conclusions? I will try the forces
Of these thy compounds on such creatures as
We count not worth the hanging, but none human,
To try the vigour of them and apply
Allayments to their act, and by them gather
Their several virtues and effects.
Cor. Your highness
Shall from this practice but make hard your heart:
Besides, the seeing these effects will be
Both noisome and infectious.
Queen. O, content thee.

Enter PISANIO.

[*Aside.*] Here comes a flattering rascal; upon him
Will I first work: he 's for his master,
And enemy to my son. How now, Pisanio!
Doctor, your service for this time is ended;
Take your own way.
Cor. [*Aside.*] I do suspect you, madam;
But you shall do no harm.
Queen. [*To Pisanio.*] Hark thee, a word.
Cor. [*Aside.*] I do not like her. She doth think she has

Strange ling'ring poisons: I do know her spirit,
And will not trust one of her malice with
A drug of such damn'd nature. Those she has
Will stupefy and dull the sense awhile;
Which first, perchance, she 'll prove on cats and dogs,
Then afterward up higher: but there is
No danger in what show of death it makes,
More than the locking-up the spirits a time,
To be more fresh, reviving. She is fool'd
With a most false effect; and I the truer,
So to be false with her.

Queen. No further service, doctor,
Until I send for thee.

Cor. I humbly take my leave. [*Exit.*

Queen. Weeps she still, say'st thou? Dost thou think in time
She will not quench and let instructions enter
Where folly now possesses? Do thou work:
When thou shalt bring me word she loves my son,
I 'll tell thee on the instant thou art then
As great as is thy master, greater, for
His fortunes all lie speechless and his name
Is at last gasp: return he cannot, nor
Continue where he is: to shift his being
Is to exchange one misery with another,
And every day that comes comes to decay
A day's work in him. What shalt thou expect,
To be depender on a thing that leans,
Who cannot be new built, nor has no friends
So much as but to prop him? [*The Queen drops the box: Pisanio takes it up.*] Thou tak'st up
Thou know'st not what; but take it for thy labour:
It is a thing I made, which hath the King
Five times redeem'd from death: I do not know
What is more cordial. Nay, I prithee, take it;
It is an earnest of a further good
That I mean to thee. Tell thy mistress how
The case stands with her; do 't as from thyself.
Think what a chance thou changest on, but think
Thou hast thy mistress still, to boot, my son,
Who shall take notice of thee: I 'll move the King
To any shape of thy preferment such
As thou 'lt desire; and then myself, I chiefly,
That set thee on to this desert, am bound
To load thy merit richly. Call my women:
Think on my words. [*Exit Pisanio.*

A sly and constant knave,
Not to be shak'd; the agent for his master
And the remembrancer of her to hold
The hand-fast to her lord. I have given him that
Which, if he take, shall quite unpeople her
Of liegers for her sweet, and which she after,
Except she bend her humour, shall be assur'd
To taste of too.

Re-enter PISANIO *and* Ladies.

So, so: well done, well done:
The violets, cowslips, and the primroses,
Bear to my closet. Fare thee well, Pisanio;
Think on my words. [*Exeunt Queen and Ladies.*

Pis. And shall do:
But when to my good lord I prove untrue,
I 'll choke myself: there 's all I 'll do for you. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI. *The same. Another room in the palace.*

Enter IMOGEN.

Imo. A father cruel, and a step-dame false;
A foolish suitor to a wedded lady,
That hath her husband banish'd; — O, that husband!
My supreme crown of grief! and those repeated
Vexations of it! Had I been thief-stol'n,
As my two brothers, happy! but most miserable
Is the desire that 's glorious: blest be those,
How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills,
Which seasons comfort. Who may this be? Fie!

Enter PISANIO *and* IACHIMO.

Pis. Madam, a noble gentleman of Rome,
Comes from my lord with letters.

Iach. Change you, madam?
The worthy Leonatus is in safety
And greets your highness dearly. [*Presents a letter.*

Imo. Thanks, good sir:
You 're kindly welcome.

Iach. [*Aside.*] All of her that is out of door most rich!
If she be furnish'd with a mind so rare,
She is alone the Arabian bird, and I
Have lost the wager. Boldness be my friend!
Arm me, audacity, from head to foot!
Or, like the Parthian, I shall flying fight;
Rather, directly fly.

80 *liegers* = ambassadors resident, and so suitors.
17 *the Arabian bird* = the phœnix.

Imo. [*Reads.*] "He is one of the noblest note, to whose kindnesses I am most infinitely tied. Reflect upon him accordingly, as you value your truest LEONATUS."

So far I read aloud:
But even the very middle of my heart
Is warm'd by the rest, and takes it thankfully.
You are as welcome, worthy sir, as I
Have words to bid you, and shall find it so
In all that I can do.
Iach. Thanks, fairest lady.
What, are men mad? Hath nature given them eyes
To see this vaulted arch, and the rich crop
Of sea and land, which can distinguish 'twixt
The fiery orbs above and the twinn'd stones
Upon th' unnumber'd beach? and can we not
Partition make with spectacles so precious
'Twixt fair and foul?
Imo. What makes your admiration?
Iach. It cannot be i' th' eye, for apes and monkeys
'Twixt two such shes would chatter this way and
Contemn with mows the other; nor i' th' judgement,
For idiots in this case of favour would
Be wisely definite; nor i' th' appetite;
Sluttery to such neat excellence oppos'd
Should make desire vomit emptiness,
Not so allured to feed.
Imo. What is the matter, trow?
Iach. The cloyed will,
That satiate yet unsatisfied desire, that tub
Both fill'd and running, ravening first the lamb,
Longs after for the garbage.
Imo. What, dear sir,
Thus raps you? Are you well?
Iach. Thanks, madam; well. [*To Pisanio.*] Beseech you, sir, desire
My man's abode where I did leave him: he
Is strange and peevish.
Pis. I was going, sir,
To give him welcome. [*Exit.*

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[32] *the rich crop.* This speech is meant to be extravagant; and S. falls into his most remotely suggestive style; *the rich crop of sea and land* = all the products of the earth; *the twinn'd stones* = the stones all like one another; *the unnumber'd beach* = the beach covered with countless sands; *spectacles* = means of sight, eyes.

[40] *mows* = grimaces.

[44] *vomit emptiness:* an obscure phrase, which may be strained to mean vomit from unsatisfied, disgusted sensation.

[50] *raps* = transports, carries you beyond yourself: rare, except in the form *rapt;* it may be a mere phonetic spelling of *wraps;* that is, in contemplation.

Imo. Continues well my lord? His health, beseech you?
Iach. Well, madam.
Imo. Is he disposed to mirth? I hope he is.
Iach. Exceeding pleasant; none a stranger there
So merry and so gamesome: he is call'd
The Briton reveller.
Imo. When he was here,
He did incline to sadness, and oft-times
Not knowing why.
Iach. I never saw him sad.
There is a Frenchman his companion, one
An eminent monsieur, that, it seems, much loves
A Gallian girl at home: he furnaces
The thick sighs from him, whiles the jolly Briton —
Your lord, I mean — laughs from 's free lungs, cries "O,
Can my sides hold, to think that man, who knows
By history, report, or his own proof,
What woman is, yea, what she cannot choose
But must be, will his free hours languish for
Assured bondage?"
Imo. Will my lord say so?
Iach. Ay, madam, with his eyes in flood with laughter:
It is a recreation to be by
And hear him mock the Frenchman. But, heavens know,
Some men are much to blame.
Imo. Not he, I hope.
Iach. Not he: but yet heaven's bounty towards him might
Be used more thankfully. In himself, 't is much;
In you — which I account his — beyond all talents.
Whilst I am bound to wonder, I am bound
To pity too.
Imo. What do you pity, sir?
Iach. Two creatures heartily.
Imo. Am I one, sir?
You look on me: what wrack discern you in me
Deserves your pity?
Iach. Lamentable! What,
To hide me from the radiant sun and solace
I' th' dungeon by a snuff?
Imo. I pray you, sir,
Deliver with more openness your answers
To my demands. Why do you pity me?
Iach. That others do —

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[78] *In himself*, etc. = In his own person heaven's bounty to him is much; in you, whom I account his, and therefore part of heaven's gifts to him, beyond all valuation. But while I wonder at you I am bound to pity.

I was about to say — enjoy your — But
It is an office of the gods to venge it,
Not mine to speak on 't.
Imo. You do seem to know
Something of me, or what concerns me: pray you, —
Since doubting things go ill often hurts more
Than to be sure they do; for certainties
Either are past remedies, or, timely knowing,
The remedy then born — discover to me
What both you spur and stop.
Iach. Had I this cheek
To bathe my lips upon; this hand, whose touch,
Whose every touch, would force the feeler's soul
To th' oath of loyalty; this object, which
Takes prisoner the wild motion of mine eye,
Fixing it only here; should I, damn'd then,
Slaver with lips as common as the stairs
That mount the Capitol; join gripes with hands
Made hard with hourly falsehood — falsehood, as
With labour; then lie peeping in an eye
Base and unlustrous as the smoky light
That 's fed with stinking tallow; it were fit
That all the plagues of hell should at one time
Encounter such revolt.
Imo. My lord, I fear,
Has forgot Britain.
Iach. And himself. Not I,
Inclin'd to this intelligence, pronounce
The beggary of his change; but 't is your graces
That from my mutest conscience to my tongue
Charms this report out.
Imo. Let me hear no more.
Iach. O dearest soul! your cause doth strike my heart
With pity, that doth make me sick. A lady
So fair, and fasten'd to an empery,
Would make the great'st king double, — to be partner'd
With tomboys hir'd with that self-exhibition
Which your own coffers yield! with diseas'd ventures
That play with all infirmities for gold
Which rottenness can lend nature! such boil'd stuff
As well might poison poison! Be reveng'd;
Or she that bore you was no queen, and you
Recoil from your great stock.
Imo. Reveng'd!
How should I be reveng'd? If this be true, —

107 *lie peeping.* The folio, *by peeping*, which some editors retain in the form *by-peeping*
121 *self-exhibition* = that very allowance of money.

As I have such a heart that both mine ears
Must not in haste abuse — if it be true,
How should I be reveng'd?
  Iach. Should he make thee
Live, like Diana's priest, betwixt cold sheets,
Whiles he is vaulting variable ramps,
In your despite, upon your purse? Revenge it.
I dedicate myself to your sweet pleasure,
More noble than that runagate to your bed,
And will continue fast to your affection,
Still close as sure.
  Imo. What, ho, Pisanio!
  Iach. Let me my service tender on your lips.
  Imo. Away! I do condemn mine ears that have
So long attended thee. If thou wert honourable,
Thou wouldst have told this tale for virtue, not
For such an end thou seek'st, — as base as strange.
Thou wrong'st a gentleman, who is as far
From thy report as thou from honour, and
Solicit'st here a lady that disdains
Thee and the Devil alike. What ho, Pisanio!
The King my father shall be made acquainted
Of thy assault: if he shall think it fit,
A saucy stranger in his court to mart
As in a Romish stew and to expound
His beastly mind to us, he hath a court
He little cares for and a daughter who
He not respects at all. What, ho, Pisanio!
  Iach. O happy Leonatus! I may say:
The credit that thy lady hath of thee
Deserves thy trust, and thy most perfect goodness
Her assur'd credit. Blessed live you long
A lady to the worthiest sir that ever
Country call'd his! and you his mistress, only
For the most worthiest fit! Give me your pardon.
I have spoke this, to know if your affiance
Were deeply rooted; and shall make your lord,
That which he is, new o'er: and he is one
The truest manner'd; such a holy witch
That he enchants societies into him;
Half all men's hearts are his.
  Imo. You make amends.
  Iach. He sits 'mongst men like a descended god:

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[136] *ramps* = rampant harlots: fantastic slang.
[152] *to us.* The simple-minded, modest Imogen, roused by indignation, here takes her state as a king's daughter.

He hath a kind of honour sets him off,
More than a mortal seeming. Be not angry,
Most mighty princess, that I have adventur'd
To try your taking of a false report; which hath
Honour'd with confirmation your great judgement
In the election of a sir so rare,
Which you know cannot err. The love I bear him
Made me to fan you thus; but the gods made you,
Unlike all others, chaffless. Pray, your pardon.
Imo. All 's well, sir: take my power i' th' court for yours.
Iach. My humble thanks. I had almost forgot
To entreat your grace but in a small request,
And yet of moment too, for it concerns
Your lord; myself and other noble friends
Are partners in the business.
Imo. Pray, what is 't?
Iach. Some dozen Romans of us and your lord —
The best feather of our wing — have mingled sums
To buy a present for the Emperor;
Which I, the factor for the rest, have done
In France: 't is plate of rare device, and jewels
Of rich and exquisite form; their values great;
And I am something curious, being strange,
To have them in safe stowage: may it please you
To take them in protection?
Imo. Willingly;
And pawn mine honour for their safety: since
My lord hath interest in them, I will keep them
In my bedchamber.
Iach. They are in a trunk,
Attended by my men: I will make bold
To send them to you, only for this night;
I must aboard to-morrow.
Imo. O, no, no.
Iach. Yes, I beseech; or I shall short my word
By lengthening my return. From Gallia
I cross'd the seas on purpose and on promise
To see your grace.
Imo. I thank you for your pains:
But not away to-morrow!
Iach. O, I must, madam:
Therefore I shall beseech you, if you please
To greet your lord with writing, do 't to-night:
I have outstood my time; which is material
To th' tender of our present.
Imo. I will write.

Send your trunk to me; it shall safe be kept,
And truly yielded you. You 're very welcome. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Britain. Before* CYMBELINE'S *palace.*

Enter CLOTEN *and two* Lords.

Clo. Was there ever man had such luck! when I kiss'd the jack, upon an up-cast to be hit away! I had a hundred pound on 't: and then a whoreson jackanapes must take me up for swearing; as if I borrowed mine oaths of him and might not spend them at my pleasure.

First Lord. What got he by that? You have broke his pate with your bowl.

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] If his wit had been like him that broke it, it would have run all out.

Clo. When a gentleman is dispos'd to swear, it is not for any standers-by to curtail his oaths, ha?

Sec. Lord. No, my lord; [*Aside*] nor crop the ears of them.

Clo. Whoreson dog! I give him satisfaction? Would he had been one of my rank!

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] To have smelt like a fool.

Clo. I am not vex'd more at any thing in the earth: a pox on 't! I had rather not be so noble as I am; they dare not fight with me, because of the Queen my mother: every Jack-slave hath his bellyful of fighting, and I must go up and down like a cock that nobody can match.

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] You are cock and capon too; and you crow, cock, with your comb on.

Clo. Sayest thou?

Sec. Lord. It is not fit your lordship should undertake every companion that you give offence to.

Clo. No, I know that: but it is fit I should commit offence to my inferiors.

Sec. Lord. Ay, it is fit for your lordship only.

Clo. Why, so I say.

First Lord. Did you hear of a stranger that 's come to court to-night?

Clo. A stranger, and I not know on 't!

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] He 's a strange fellow himself, and knows it not.

First Lord. There 's an Italian come; and, 't is thought, one of Leonatus' friends.

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[1] *kiss'd the jack:* referring to a game at bowls, in which the pin aimed at was called the jack.

Clo. Leonatus! a banish'd rascal; and he 's another, whatsoever he be. Who told you of this stranger?

First Lord. One of your lordship's pages.

Clo. Is it fit I went to look upon him? is there no derogation in 't?

Sec. Lord. You cannot derogate, my lord.

Clo. Not easily, I think.

Sec. Lord. [*Aside.*] You are a fool granted; therefore your issues, being foolish, do not derogate.

Clo. Come, I 'll go see this Italian: what I have lost to-day at bowls I 'll win to-night of him. Come, go.

Sec. Lord. I 'll attend your lordship. [*Exeunt Cloten and First Lord.*
That such a crafty devil as is his mother
Should yield the world this ass! a woman that
Bears all down with her brain; and this her son
Cannot take two from twenty, for his heart,
And leave eighteen. Alas, poor princess,
Thou divine Imogen, what thou endur'st,
Betwixt a father by thy step-dame govern'd,
A mother hourly coining plots, a wooer
More hateful than the foul expulsion is
Of thy dear husband, than that horrid act
Of the divorce he 'ld make! The heavens hold firm
The walls of thy dear honour, keep unshak'd
That temple, thy fair mind, that thou mayst stand,
To enjoy thy banish'd lord and this great land! [*Exit.*

SCENE II. IMOGEN'S *bedchamber in* CYMBELINE'S *palace: a trunk in one corner of it.*

IMOGEN *in bed, reading; a* Lady *attending.*

Imo. Who 's there? my woman Helen?
Lady. Please you, madam.
Imo. What hour is it?
Lady. Almost midnight, madam.
Imo. I have read three hours then: mine eyes are weak:
Fold down the leaf where I have left: to bed:
Take not away the taper, leave it burning;
And if thou canst awake by four o' th' clock,
I prithee, call me. Sleep hath seiz'd me wholly. [*Exit Lady.*
To your protection I commend me, gods.
From fairies and the tempters of the night
Guard me, beseech ye. [*Sleeps. Iachimo comes from the trunk.*
Iach. The crickets sing, and man's o'er-labour'd sense
Repairs itself by rest. Our Tarquin thus

[12] *Our Tarquin*, etc. See *Lucrece*.

Did softly press the rushes, ere he waken'd
The chastity he wounded. Cytherea,
How bravely thou becom'st thy bed, fresh lily,
And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch!
But kiss; one kiss! Rubies unparagon'd,
How dearly they do 't! 'T is her breathing that
Perfumes the chamber thus: the flame o' th' taper
Bows toward her, and would under-peep her lids,
To see th' enclosed lights, now canopied
Under these windows, white and azure lac'd
With blue of heaven's own tinct. But my design,
To note the chamber: I will write all down:
Such and such pictures; there the window; such
The adornment of her bed; the arras; figures,
Why, such and such; and the contents o' th' story.
Ah, but some natural notes about her body,
Above ten thousand meaner moveables
Would testify, to enrich mine inventory.
O sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her!
And be her sense but as a monument,
Thus in a chapel lying! Come off, come off:
[*Taking off her bracelet.*
As slippery as the Gordian knot was hard!
'T is mine; and this will witness outwardly,
As strongly as the conscience does within,
To the madding of her lord. On her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I' th' bottom of a cowslip: here 's a voucher,
Stronger than ever law could make: this secret
Will force him think I have pick'd the lock and ta'en
The treasure of her honour. No more. To what end?
Why should I write this down, that 's riveted,
Screw'd to my memory? She hath been reading late
The tale of Tereus; here the leaf 's turn'd down
Where Philome gave up. I have enough:
To th' trunk again, and shut the spring of it.
Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning
May bare the raven's eye! I lodge in fear;
Though this a heavenly angel, hell is here. [*Clock strikes.*
One, two, three: time, time! [*Goes into the trunk. The scene closes.*

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14 *Cytherea* = Venus.

34 *Gordian knot:* an intricate knot, by which Gordius, a Phrygian peasant, being chosen king, tied up the yoke of his wagon, on dedicating it to Jupiter. Alexander, being told that he who should loose the knot would be king of the East, cut it with his sword.

45 *Tereus*, according to one story, committed bigamy with Philomel, who loved him; according to another, ravished her. She was turned into a nightingale.

49 *bare the raven's eye.* The raven is the earliest of birds.

SCENE III. *An antechamber adjoining* IMOGEN'S *apartments.*

Enter CLOTEN *and* Lords.

First Lord. Your lordship is the most patient man in loss, the most coldest that ever turn'd up ace.

Clo. It would make any man cold to lose.

First Lord. But not every man patient after the noble temper of your lordship. You are most hot and furious when you win.

Clo. Winning will put any man into courage. If I could get this foolish Imogen, I should have gold enough. It 's almost morning, is 't not?

First Lord. Day, my lord.

Clo. I would this music would come: I am advised to give her music o' mornings: they say it will penetrate.

Enter Musicians.

Come on; tune: if you can penetrate her with your fingering, so; we 'll try with tongue too: if none will do, let her remain; but I 'll never give o'er. First, a very excellent good-conceited thing; after, a wonderful sweet air, with admirable rich words to it: and then let her consider.

SONG.

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
  And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
  On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
  To ope their golden eyes:
With every thing that pretty is,
  My lady sweet, arise:
    Arise, arise.

Clo. So, get you gone. If this penetrate, I will consider your music the better: if it do not, it is a vice in her ears, which horse-hairs and calves'-guts, nor the voice of unpaved eunuch to boot, can never amend. [*Exeunt Musicians.*

Sec. Lord. Here comes the King.

Clo. I am glad I was up so late; for that 's the reason I was up so early: he cannot choose but take this service I have done fatherly.

Enter CYMBELINE *and* QUEEN.

Good morrow to your majesty and to my gracious mother.

Cym. Attend you here the door of our stern daughter? Will she not forth?

Clo. I have assail'd her with music, but she vouchsafes no notice.

---

29 *calves' guts.* It seems that S. knew that what is called catgut is made of the small intestines of calves or sheep. *unpaved* = stoneless.

Cym. The exile of her minion is too new;
She hath not yet forgot him: some more time
Must wear the print of his remembrance out,
And then she 's yours.
Queen. You are most bound to th' King,
Who lets go by no vantages that may
Prefer you to his daughter. Frame yourself
To orderly soliciting, and be friended
With aptness of the season; make denials
Increase your services; so seem as if
You were inspir'd to do those duties which
You tender to her; that you in all obey her,
Save when command to your dismission tends,
And therein you are senseless.
Clo. Senseless! not so.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. So like you, sir, ambassadors from Rome;
The one is Caius Lucius.
Cym. A worthy fellow,
Albeit he comes on angry purpose now;
But that 's no fault of his: we must receive him
According to the honour of his sender;
And towards himself, his goodness forespent on us,
We must extend our notice. Our dear son,
When you have given good morning to your mistress,
Attend the Queen and us; we shall have need
To employ you towards this Roman. Come, our queen.
[*Exeunt all but Cloten.*

Clo. If she be up, I 'll speak with her; if not,
Let her lie still and dream. [*Knocks.*] By your leave, ho!
I know her women are about her: what
If I do line one of their hands? 'T is gold
Which buys admittance; oft it doth; yea, and makes
Diana's rangers false themselves, yield up
Their deer to th' stand o' th' stealer; and 't is gold
Which makes the true man kill'd and saves the thief;
Nay, sometime hangs both thief and true man: what
Can it not do and undo? I will make
One of her women lawyer to me, for
I yet not understand the case myself.
[*Knocks.*] By your leave.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. Who 's there that knocks?
Clo. A gentleman.
Lady. No more?

---

68 *false:* used as a verb = make false.

Clo. Yes, and a gentlewoman's son.
Lady. That 's more
Than some, whose tailors are as dear as yours,
Can justly boast of. What 's your lordship's pleasure?
Clo. Your lady's person: is she ready?
Lady. Ay,
To keep her chamber.
Clo. There is gold for you;
Sell me your good report.
Lady. How! my good name? or to report of you
What I shall think is good? — The Princess!

Enter IMOGEN.

Clo. Good morrow, fairest: sister, your sweet hand.
[*Exit Lady.*

Imo. Good morrow, sir. You lay out too much pains
For purchasing but trouble: the thanks I give
Is telling you that I am poor of thanks
And scarce can spare them.
Clo. Still, I swear I love you.
Imo. If you but said so, 't were as deep with me:
If you swear still, your recompense is still
That I regard it not.
Clo. This is no answer.
Imo. But that you shall not say I yield being silent,
I would not speak. I pray you, spare me: 'faith,
I shall unfold equal discourtesy
To your best kindness: one of your great knowing
Should learn, being taught, forbearance.
Clo. To leave you in your madness, 't were my sin:
I will not.
Imo. Fools cure not mad folks.
Clo. Do you call me fool?
Imo. As I am mad, I do:
If you 'll be patient, I 'll no more be mad;
That cures us both. I am much sorry, sir,
You put me to forget a lady's manners,
By being so verbal: and learn now, for all,
That I, which know my heart, do here pronounce,
By the very truth of it, I care not for you,
And am so near the lack of charity —
To accuse myself — I hate you; which I had rather
You felt than make 't my boast.

---

80 *ready* = dressed.

100 *Fools cure not mad folks.* The folio, "Fools *are* not," etc., which may possibly be the true reading; but Cloten's speech, to which this is an answer, and Imogen's reply, line 103, "that *cures* us both," leave little room for doubt as to the misprint.

105 *verbal* = wordy, and ready to catch at words.

Clo. You sin against
Obedience, which you owe your father. For
The contract you pretend with that base wretch,
One bred of alms and foster'd with cold dishes,
With scraps o' th' court, it is no contract, none:
And though it be allow'd in meaner parties —
Yet who than he more mean? — to knit their souls,
On whom there is no more dependency
But brats and beggary, in self-figur'd knot;
Yet you are curb'd from that enlargement by
The consequence o' th' crown, and must not soil
The precious note of it with a base slave,
A hilding for a livery, a squire's cloth,
A pantler, not so eminent.
Imo. Profane fellow!
Wert thou the son of Jupiter and no more
But what thou art besides, thou wert too base
To be his groom: thou wert dignified enough,
Even to the point of envy, if 't were made
Comparative for your virtues, to be styl'd
The under-hangman of his kingdom, and hated
For being preferr'd so well.
Clo. The south-fog rot him!
Imo. He never can meet more mischance than come
To be but nam'd of thee. His meanest garment,
That ever hath but clipp'd his body, is dearer
In my respect than all the hairs above thee,
Were they all made such men. How now, Pisanio!

Enter Pisanio.

Clo. "His garment!" Now the Devil —
Imo. To Dorothy my woman hie thee presently —
Clo. "His garment!"
Imo. I am sprited with a fool,
Frighted, and anger'd worse: go bid my woman
Search for a jewel that too casually
Hath left mine arm: it was thy master's: 'shrew me,
If I would lose it for a revenue
Of any king's in Europe. I do think
I saw 't this morning: confident I am
Last night 't was on mine arm; I kiss'd it:
I hope it be not gone to tell my lord
That I kiss aught but he.
Pis. 'T will not be lost.

---

[122] *hilding* = base hireling.
[123] *pantler* = servant in charge of the pantry.
[133] *clipp'd* = embraced, surrounded.
[147] *but he:* carelessly written for, but him.

Imo. I hope so: go and search. [*Exit Pisanio.*
Clo. You have abus'd me:
"His meanest garment!"
Imo. Ay, I said so, sir:
If you will make 't an action, call witness to 't.
Clo. I will inform your father.
Imo. Your mother too:
She 's my good lady, and will conceive, I hope,
But the worst of me. So, I leave you, sir,
To th' worst of discontent. [*Exit.*
Clo. I 'll be reveng'd:
"His meanest garment!" Well. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Rome.* PHILARIO'S *house.*

Enter POSTHUMUS *and* PHILARIO.

Post. Fear it not, sir: I would I were so sure
To win the King as I am bold her honour
Will remain hers.
Phi. What means do you make to him?
Post. Not any, but abide the change of time,
Quake in the present winter's state, and wish
That warmer days would come: in these sear'd hopes,
I barely gratify your love; they failing,
I must die much your debtor.
Phi. Your very goodness and your company
O'erpays all I can do. By this, your king
Hath heard of great Augustus: Caius Lucius
Will do 's commission throughly: and I think
He 'll grant the tribute, send the arrearages,
Or look upon our Romans, whose remembrance
Is yet fresh in their grief.
Post. I do believe,
Statist though I am none, nor like to be,
That this will prove a war; and you shall hear
The legions now in Gallia sooner landed
In our not-fearing Britain than have tidings
Of any penny tribute paid. Our countrymen
Are men more order'd than when Julius Cæsar
Smil'd at their lack of skill, but found their courage
Worthy his frowning at: their discipline,
Now mingled with their courages, will make known
To their approvers they are people such
That mend upon the world.

---

16 *Statist* = state-ist, statesman, politician.

Enter Iachimo.

Phi. See! Iachimo!
Post. The swiftest harts have posted you by land;
And winds of all the corners kiss'd your sails,
To make your vessel nimble.
Phi. Welcome, sir.
Post. I hope the briefness of your answer made
The speediness of your return.
Iach. Your lady
Is one of the fairest that I have look'd upon.
Post. And therewithal the best; or let her beauty
Look through a casement to allure false hearts
And be false with them.
Iach. Here are letters for you.
Post. Their tenour good, I trust.
Iach. 'T is very like.
Phi. Was Caius Lucius in the Britain court
When you were there?
Iach. He was expected then,
But not approach'd.
Post. All is well yet.
Sparkles this stone as it was wont? or is 't not
Too dull for your good wearing?
Iach. If I had lost it,
I should have lost the worth of it in gold.
I 'll make a journey twice as far, to enjoy
A second night of such sweet shortness which
Was mine in Britain; for the ring is won.
Post. The stone 's too hard to come by.
Iach. Not a whit,
Your lady being so easy.
Post. Make not, sir,
Your loss your sport: I hope you know that we
Must not continue friends.
Iach. Good sir, we must,
If you keep covenant. Had I not brought
The knowledge of your mistress home, I grant
We were to question further: but I now
Profess myself the winner of her honour,
Together with your ring; and not the wronger
Of her or you, having proceeded but
By both your wills.
Post. If you can make 't apparent
That you have tasted her in bed, my hand
And ring is yours; if not, the foul opinion
You had of her pure honour gains or loses

Your sword or mine, or masterless leaves both
To who shall find them.
Iach. Sir, my circumstances,
Being so near the truth as I will make them,
Must first induce you to believe: whose strength
I will confirm with oath; which, I doubt not,
You 'll give me leave to spare, when you shall find
You need it not.
Post. Proceed.
Iach. First, her bedchamber, —
Where, I confess, I slept not, but profess
Had that was well worth watching — it was hang'd
With tapestry of silk and silver; the story
Proud Cleopatra, when she met her Roman,
And Cydnus swell'd above the banks, or for
The press of boats or pride: a piece of work
So bravely done, so rich, that it did strive
In workmanship and value; which I wonder'd
Could be so rarely and exactly wrought,
Since the true life on 't was —
Post. This is true;
And this you might have heard of here, by me,
Or by some other.
Iach. More particulars
Must justify my knowledge.
Post. So they must,
Or do your honour injury.
Iach. The chimney
Is south the chamber, and the chimney-piece
Chaste Dian bathing: never saw I figures
So likely to report themselves: the cutter
Was as another nature, dumb; outwent her,
Motion and breath left out.
Post. This is a thing
Which you might from relation likewise reap,
Being, as it is, much spoke of.
Iach. The roof o' th' chamber
With golden cherubins is fretted: her andirons —
I had forgot them — were two winking Cupids
Of silver, each on one foot standing, nicely
Depending on their brands.
Post. This is her honour!

---

[81] *the chimney-piece*, etc. It should be needless to say that S. here makes Iachimo describe a state bed-chamber in a great house in England in his own day, not that of a British princess in the time of the Druids.
[89] *winking Cupids* = Cupids with closed eyes.
[91] *Depending on their brands* = resting on their inverted torches.

Let it be granted you have seen all this — and praise
Be given to your remembrance — the description
Of what is in her chamber nothing saves
The wager you have laid.
Iach. Then, if you can, [*Showing the bracelet.*
Be pale: I beg but leave to air this jewel; see!
And now 't is up again: it must be married
To that your diamond; I 'll keep them.
Post. Jove!
Once more let me behold it: is it that
Which I left with her?
Iach. Sir — I thank her — that:
She stripp'd it from her arm; I see her yet;
Her pretty action did outsell her gift,
And yet enrich'd it too: she gave it me, and said
She priz'd it once.
Post. May be she pluck'd it off
To send it me.
Iach. She writes so to you, doth she?
Post. O, no, no, no! 't is true. Here, take this too;
[*Gives the ring.*
It is a basilisk unto mine eye,
Kills me to look on 't. Let there be no honour
Where there is beauty; truth, where semblance; love,
Where there 's another man: the vows of women
Of no more bondage be, to where they are made,
Than they are to their virtues; which is nothing.
O, above measure false!
Phi. Have patience, sir,
And take your ring again; 't is not yet won:
It may be probable she lost it; or
Who knows if one of her women, being corrupted,
Hath stol'n it from her?
Post. Very true;
And so, I hope, he came by 't. Back my ring:
Render to me some corporal sign about her,
More evident than this; for this was stolen.
Iach. By Jupiter, I had it from her arm.
Post. Hark you, he swears; by Jupiter he swears.
'T is true: — nay, keep the ring — 't is true: I am sure
She would not lose it: her attendants are
All sworn and honourable: — they induced to steal it!
And by a stranger! — No, he hath enjoy'd her:
The cognizance of her incontinency
Is this: she hath bought the name of whore thus dearly.

---

107 *basilisk:* a fabled monster of the serpent kind, whose look was mortal.

There, take thy hire; and all the fiends of hell
Divide themselves between you!
Phi. Sir, be patient:
This is not strong enough to be believ'd
Of one persuaded well of —
Post. Never talk on 't;
She hath been colted by him.
Iach. If you seek
For further satisfying, under her breast —
Worthy the pressing — lies a mole, right proud
Of that most delicate lodging: by my life,
I kiss'd it; and it gave me present hunger
To feed again, though full. You do remember
This stain upon her?
Post. Ay, and it doth confirm
Another stain, as big as hell can hold,
Were there no more but it.
Iach. Will you hear more?
Post. Spare your arithmetic: never count the turns;
Once, and a million!
Iach. I 'll be sworn —
Post. No swearing.
If you will swear you have not done 't, you lie;
And I will kill thee, if thou dost deny
Thou 'st made me cuckold.
Iach. I 'll deny nothing.
Post. O, that I had her here, to tear her limbmeal!
I will go there and do 't, i' th' court, before
Her father. I 'll do something — [*Exit.*
Phi. Quite besides
The government of patience! You have won:
Let 's follow him, and pervert the present wrath
He hath against himself.
Iach. With all my heart. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Another room in* PHILARIO'S *house.*

Enter POSTHUMUS.

Post. Is there no way for men to be but women
Must be half-workers? We are all bastards;
And that most venerable man which I
Did call my father, was I know not where
When I was stamp'd; some coiner with his tools
Made me a counterfeit: yet my mother seem'd
The Dian of that time: so doth my wife
The nonpareil of this. O, vengeance, vengeance!

Me of my lawful pleasure she restrain'd
And pray'd me oft forbearance; did it with
A pudency so rosy the sweet view on 't
Might well have warm'd old Saturn; that I thought her
As chaste as unsunn'd snow. O, all the devils!
This yellow Iachimo, in an hour, — was 't not? —
Or less, — at first? — perchance he spoke not, but,
Like a full-acorn'd boar, a German one,
Cried "O!" and mounted; found no opposition
But what he look'd for should oppose and she
Should from encounter guard. Could I find out
The woman's part in me! For there 's no motion
That tends to vice in man, but I affirm
It is the woman's part: be it lying, note it,
The woman's; flattering, hers; deceiving, hers;
Lust and rank thoughts, hers, hers; revenges, hers;
Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain,
Nice longing, slanders, mutability,
All faults that may be nam'd, nay, that hell knows,
Why, hers, in part or all; but rather, all;
For even to vice
They are not constant, but are changing still
One vice, but of a minute old, for one
Not half so old as that. I 'll write against them,
Detest them, curse them: yet 't is greater skill
In a true hate, to pray they have their will:
The very devils cannot plague them better. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Britain. A hall in* CYMBELINE'S *palace.*

Enter in state, CYMBELINE, QUEEN, CLOTEN, *and* Lords *at one door, and at another,* CAIUS LUCIUS *and* Attendants.

Cym. Now say, what would Augustus Cæsar with us?
Luc. When Julius Cæsar, whose remembrance yet
Lives in men's eyes and will to ears and tongues
Be theme and hearing ever, was in this Britain
And conquer'd it, Cassibelan, thine uncle, —
Famous in Cæsar's praises, no whit less
Than in his feats deserving it — for him
And his succession granted Rome a tribute,
Yearly three thousand pounds, which by thee lately
Is left untender'd.
Queen. And, to kill the marvel,
Shall be so ever.

Clo. There be many Cæsars,
Ere such another Julius. Britain is
A world by itself; and we will nothing pay
For wearing our own noses.
Queen. That opportunity
Which then they had to take from 's, to resume
We have again. Remember, sir, my liege,
The kings your ancestors, together with
The natural bravery of your isle, which stands
As Neptune's park, ribbed and paled in
With rocks unscaleable and roaring waters,
With sands that will not bear your enemies' boats,
But suck them up to the topmast. A kind of conquest
Cæsar made here; but made not here his brag
Of Came and saw and overcame: with shame —
The first that ever touch'd him — he was carried
From off our coast, twice beaten; and his shipping —
Poor ignorant baubles! — on our terrible seas,
Like egg-shells mov'd upon their surges, crack'd
As easily 'gainst our rocks: for joy whereof
The famed Cassibelan, who was once at point —
O giglot fortune! — to master Cæsar's sword,
Made Lud's town with rejoicing fires bright
And Britons strut with courage.

Clo. Come, there 's no more tribute to be paid: our kingdom is stronger than it was at that time; and, as I said, there is no moe such Cæsars: other of them may have crook'd noses, but to owe such straight arms, none.

Cym. Son, let your mother end.

Clo. We have yet many among us can gripe as hard as Cassibelan: I do not say I am one; but I have a hand. Why tribute? why should we pay tribute? If Cæsar can hide the sun from us with a blanket, or put the moon in his pocket, we will pay him tribute for light; else, sir, no more tribute, pray you now.

Cym. You must know,
Till the injurious Romans did extort
This tribute from us, we were free: Cæsar's ambition,
Which swell'd so much that it did almost stretch
The sides o' th' world, against all colour here
Did put the yoke upon 's; which to shake off
Becomes a warlike people, whom we reckon
Ourselves to be.

---

[19] *ribbed and paled.* The rhythm requires that both these words should have their full participial sound: a good example in illustration of the remarks in Preface, vol. i. pp. xxvii, xxviii.

[32] *Lud's town* = London.

Clo. We do.
Cym. Say, then, to Cæsar,
Our ancestor was that Mulmutius which
Ordain'd our laws, whose use the sword of Cæsar
Hath too much mangled; whose repair and franchise
Shall, by the power we hold, be our good deed,
Though Rome be therefore angry: Mulmutius made our laws,
Who was the first of Britain which did put
His brows within a golden crown and call'd
Himself a king.
Luc. I am sorry, Cymbeline,
That I am to pronounce Augustus Cæsar —
Cæsar, that hath more kings his servants than
Thyself domestic officers — thine enemy:
Receive it from me, then: war and confusion
In Cæsar's name pronounce I 'gainst thee: look
For fury not to be resisted. Thus defied,
I thank thee for myself.
Cym. Thou art welcome, Caius.
Thy Cæsar knighted me; my youth I spent
Much under him; of him I gather'd honour;
Which he to seek of me again, perforce,
Behoves me keep at utterance. I am perfect
That the Pannonians and Dalmatians for
Their liberties are now in arms; a precedent
Which not to read would show the Britons cold:
So Cæsar shall not find them.
Luc. Let proof speak.

Clo. His majesty bids you welcome. Make pastime with us a day or two, or longer: if you seek us afterwards in other terms, you shall find us in our salt-water girdle; if you beat us out of it, it is yours; if you fall in the adventure, our crows shall fare the better for you; and there 's an end.

Luc. So, sir.

Cym. I know your master's pleasure and he mine:
All the remain is "Welcome!" [*Exeunt*

Scene II. *Another room in the palace.*

Enter Pisanio, *with a letter.*

Pis. How! of adultery? Wherefore write you not
What monster 's her accuser? Leonatus!
O master! what a strange infection
Is fall'n into thy ear! What false Italian,
As poisonous-tongu'd as handed, hath prevail'd

---

71 *at utterance* = at outer-ance, at sword's point.

On thy too ready hearing? Disloyal! No:
She 's punish'd for her truth, and undergoes,
More goddess-like than wife-like, such assaults
As would take in some virtue. O my master!
Thy mind to her is now as low as were
Thy fortunes. How! that I should murder her?
Upon the love and truth and vows which I
Have made to thy command? I, her? her blood?
If it be so to do good service, never
Let me be counted serviceable. How look I,
That I should seem to lack humanity
So much as this fact comes to? [*Reading.*] "Do 't: the letter
That I have sent her, by her own command
Shall give thee opportunity." O damn'd paper!
Black as the ink that 's on thee! Senseless bauble,
Art thou a feodary for this act, and look'st
So virgin-like without? Lo, here she comes.
I am ignorant in what I am commanded.

Enter IMOGEN.

Imo. How now, Pisanio!
Pis. Madam, here is a letter from my lord.
Imo. Who? thy lord? that is my lord, Leonatus!
O, learn'd indeed were that astronomer
That knew the stars as I his characters;
He 'ld lay the future open. You good gods,
Let what is here contain'd relish of love,
Of my lord's health, of his content, — yet not
That we two are asunder; let that grieve him:
Some griefs are med'cinable; that is one of them,
For it doth physic love: of his content,
All but in that! Good wax, thy leave. Blest be
You bees that make these locks of counsel! Lovers
And men in dangerous bonds pray not alike:
Though forfeiters you cast in prison, yet
You clasp young Cupid's tables. Good news, gods!

[*Reads.*] "Justice, and your father's wrath, should he take me in his dominion, could not be so cruel to me as you, O the dearest of creatures, would even renew me with your eyes. Take notice that I am in Cambria, at Milford-Haven: what your own love will out of this advise you, follow. So he wishes you all happiness, that remains loyal to his vow, and your, increasing in love, LEONATUS POSTHUMUS."

O, for a horse with wings! Hear'st thou, Pisanio?

---

17 *this fact* = this deed, this act.
21 *feodary* = confederate.
41 *would even renew, etc.* This confused sentence stands, I am now persuaded, as S. wrote it, intending a comparison between the power of Imogen's father's wrath and her power to compensate and restore.

He is at Milford-Haven: read, and tell me
How far 't is thither. If one of mean affairs
May plod it in a week, why may not I
Glide thither in a day? Then, true Pisanio, —
Who long'st, like me, to see thy lord; who long'st, —
O, let me bate, — but not like me — yet long'st,
But in a fainter kind: — O, not like me;
For mine 's beyond beyond — say, and speak thick;
Love's counsellor should fill the bores of hearing,
To th' smothering of the sense — how far it is
To this same blessed Milford: and by the way
Tell me how Wales was made so happy as
To inherit such a haven: but first of all,
How we may steal from hence, and for the gap
That we shall make in time, from our hence-going
And our return, to excuse: but first, how get hence:
Why should excuse be born or e'er begot?
We 'll talk of that hereafter. Prithee, speak,
How many score of miles may we well ride
'Twixt hour and hour?
Pis. One score 'twixt sun and sun,
Madam, 's enough for you: [*Aside*] and too much too.
Imo. Why, one that rode to 's execution, man,
Could never go so slow: I have heard of riding wagers,
Where horses have been nimbler than the sands
That run i' th' clock's behalf. But this is foolery:
Go bid my woman feign a sickness; say
She 'll home to her father: and provide me presently
A riding-suit, no costlier than would fit
A franklin's housewife.
Pis. Madam, you 're best consider.
Imo. I see before me, man: nor here, nor here,
Nor what ensues, but have a fog in them,
That I cannot look through. Away, I prithee;
Do as I bid thee: there 's no more to say;
Accessible is none but Milford way. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *Wales: a mountainous country with a cave.*

Enter, from the cave, Belarius; Guiderius, *and* Arviragus *following.*

Bel. A goodly day not to keep house, with such
Whose roof 's as low as ours! Stoop, boys; this gate
Instructs you how to adore the heavens and bows you
To a morning's holy office. The gates of monarchs

---

54 *speak thick* = speak fast: we still say that snow or hail falls thick.
75 *franklin* = a freeman landholder, a freeholder; *you 're* = you were.
1 *keep house* = keep at home.

Are arch'd so high that giants may jet through
And keep their impious turbans on, without
Good morrow to the sun. Hail, thou fair heaven!
We house i' th' rock, yet use thee not so hardly
As prouder livers do.
Gui. Hail, heaven!
Arv. Hail, heaven!
Bel. Now for our mountain sport: up to yond hill;
Your legs are young; I 'll tread these flats. Consider,
When you above perceive me like a crow,
That it is place which lessens and sets off:
And you may then revolve what tales I have told you
Of courts, of princes, of the tricks in war:
This service is not service, so being done,
But being so allow'd: to apprehend thus,
Draws us a profit from all things we see;
And often, to our comfort, shall we find
The sharded beetle in a safer hold
Than is the full-wing'd eagle. O, this life
Is nobler than attending for a check;
Richer than doing nothing for a bribe,
Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk:
Such gain the cap of him that makes 'em fine,
Yet keeps his book uncross'd: no life to ours.
Gui. Out of your proof you speak: we, poor unfledg'd,
Have never wing'd from view o' th' nest, nor know not
What air 's from home. Haply this life is best,
If quiet life be best; sweeter to you
That have a sharper known; well corresponding
With your stiff age: but unto us it is
A cell of ignorance; travelling a-bed;
A prison for a debtor, that not dares
To stride a limit.
Arv. What should we speak of
When we are old as you? when we shall hear
The rain and wind beat dark December, how,
In this our pinching cave, shall we discourse
The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing;
We are beastly; subtle as the fox for prey,

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[5] *jet* = thrust out, strut, swagger.

[6] *impious turbans.* In S.'s time giants were generally represented as pagans or Mohammedans.

[20] *sharded* = covered with shards. A shard is a thin, hard substance; for example, pot-sherd.

[23] *for a bribe:* the folio "a *babe;*" a manifest misprint. Perhaps we should read, with some editors, a bauble.

[25] *the cap* = the bow, the deferential salutation.

[26] *his book uncross'd* = his evidence of debt uncancelled.

Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat;
Our valour is to chase what flies; our cage
We make a quire, as doth the prison'd bird,
And sing our bondage freely.
Bel. How you speak!
Did you but know the city's usuries
And felt them knowingly; the art o' th' court,
As hard to leave as keep; whose top to climb
Is certain falling, or so slipp'ry that
The fear 's as bad as falling; the toil o' th' war,
A pain that only seems to seek out danger
I' th' name of fame and honour; which dies i' th' search,
And hath as oft a sland'rous epitaph
As record of fair act; nay, many times,
Doth ill deserve by doing well; what 's worse,
Must court'sy at the censure: — O boys, this story
The world may read in me: my body 's mark'd
With Roman swords, and my report was once
First with the best of note. Cymbeline lov'd me,
And when a soldier was the theme, my name
Was not far off. Then was I as a tree
Whose boughs did bend with fruit: but in one night,
A storm or robbery, call it what you will,
Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves,
And left me bare to weather.
Gui. Uncertain favour!
Bel. My fault being nothing — as I have told you oft —
But that two villains, whose false oaths prevail'd
Before my perfect honour, swore to Cymbeline
I was confederate with the Romans: so
Follow'd my banishment, and this twenty years
This rock and these demesnes have been my world;
Where I have liv'd at honest freedom, paid
More pious debts to heaven than in all
The fore-end of my time. But up to the mountains!
This is not hunters' language: he that strikes
The venison first shall be the lord o' th' feast;
To him the other two shall minister;
And we will fear no poison, which attends
In place of greater state. I 'll meet you in the valleys.
[*Exeunt Guiderius and Arviragus.*
How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature!
These boys know little they are sons to th' King;
Nor Cymbeline dreams that they are alive.

---

[45] *the city's usuries:* that is, the price the city makes men pay for its pleasures and advantages.

They think they are mine; and though train'd thus meanly
I' th' cave wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit
The roofs of palaces, and nature prompts them
In simple and low things to prince it much
Beyond the trick of others. This Polydore,
The heir of Cymbeline and Britain, who
The King his father call'd Guiderius, — Jove!
When on my three-foot stool I sit and tell
The warlike feats I have done, his spirits fly out
Into my story: say "Thus mine enemy fell,
And thus I set my foot on 's neck;" even then
The princely blood flows in his cheek, he sweats,
Strains his young nerves and puts himself in posture
That acts my words. The younger brother, Cadwal,
Once Arviragus, in as like a figure,
Strikes life into my speech and shows much more
His own conceiving. — Hark, the game is rous'd! —
O Cymbeline! heaven and my conscience knows
Thou didst unjustly banish me: whereon,
At three and two years old, I stole these babes;
Thinking to bar thee of succession, as
Thou reft'st me of my lands. Euriphile,
Thou wast their nurse; they took thee for their mother,
And every day do honour to her grave:
Myself, Belarius, that am Morgan call'd,
They take for natural father. The game is up. [*Exit*.

SCENE IV. *Country near Milford-Haven.*

Enter PISANIO *and* IMOGEN.

Imo. Thou told'st me, when we came from horse, the place
Was near at hand: ne'er long'd my mother so
To see me first, as I have now. Pisanio! man!
Where is Posthumus? What is in thy mind,
That makes thee stare thus? Wherefore breaks that sigh
From the inward of thee? One, but painted thus,
Would be interpreted a thing perplex'd
Beyond self-explication: put thyself
Into a haviour of less fear, ere wildness
Vanquish my staider senses. What 's the matter?
Why tender'st thou that paper to me, with
A look untender? If 't be summer news,
Smile to 't before; if winterly, thou need'st
But keep that countenance still. My husband's hand!

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[3] *as I have now* = as I have now longed to see Posthumus; an astonishing ellipsis in any writer but S. in his latest period.

That drug-damn'd Italy hath out-craftied him,
And he 's at some hard point. Speak, man: thy tongue
May take off some extremity, which to read
Would be even mortal to me.
Pis. Please you, read;
And you shall find me, wretched man, a thing
The most disdain'd of fortune.

Imo. [*Reads.*] "Thy mistress, Pisanio, hath played the strumpet in my bed; the testimonies whereof lie bleeding in me. I speak not out of weak surmises, but from proof as strong as my grief and as certain as I expect my revenge. That part thou, Pisanio, must act for me, if thy faith be not tainted with the breach of hers. Let thine own hands take away her life: I shall give thee opportunity at Milford-Haven. She hath my letter for the purpose: where, if thou fear to strike and to make me certain it is done, thou art the pander to her dishonour and equally to me disloyal."

Pis. What shall I need to draw my sword? the paper
Hath cut her throat already. No, 't is slander,
Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
Outvenoms all the worms of Nile, whose breath
Rides on the posting winds and doth belie
All corners of the world: kings, queens and states,
Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave
This viperous slander enters. What cheer, madam?
Imo. False to his bed! What is it to be false?
To lie in watch there and to think on him?
To weep 'twixt clock and clock? if sleep charge nature,
To break it with a fearful dream of him
And cry myself awake? that 's false to 's bed, is it?
Pis. Alas, good lady!
Imo. I false! Thy conscience witness: Iachimo,
Thou didst accuse him of incontinency;
Thou then look'dst like a villain; now methinks
Thy favour 's good enough. Some jay of Italy
Whose mother was her painting, hath betray'd him!
Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion;
And, for I am richer than to hang by the walls,
I must be ripp'd: — to pieces with me! — O,
Men's vows are women's traitors! All good seeming,
By thy revolt, O husband, shall be thought
Put on for villany; not born where 't grows,
But worn a bait for ladies.
Pis. Good madam, hear me.
Imo. True honest men being heard, like false Æneas,

[48] *Whose mother was her painting:* an obscure passage, which may mean, who is the creature of paint, or, whose mother was her picture: that is, just like her. The Collier folio of 1632 speciously reads, "Who smothers her with painting."

Were in his time thought false, and Sinon's weeping
Did scandal many a holy tear, took pity
From most true wretchedness: so thou, Posthumus,
Wilt lay the leaven on all proper men;
Goodly and gallant shall be false and perjur'd
From thy great fail. — Come, fellow, be thou honest:
Do thou thy master's bidding: when thou see'st him,
A little witness my obedience: look!
I draw the sword myself: take it, and hit
The innocent mansion of my love, my heart:
Fear not; 't is empty of all things but grief:
Thy master is not there, who was indeed
The riches of it. Do his bidding; strike.
Thou mayst be valiant in a better cause;
But now thou seem'st a coward.
Pis. Hence, vile instrument!
Thou shalt not damn my hand.
Imo. Why, I must die;
And if I do not by thy hand, thou art
No servant of thy master's. Against self-slaughter
There is a prohibition so divine
That cravens my weak hand. Come, here 's my heart.
Something 's afore 't. Soft, soft! we 'll no defence;
Obedient as the scabbard. What is here?
The scriptures of the loyal Leonatus,
All turn'd to heresy? Away, away,
Corrupters of my faith! you shall no more
Be stomachers to my heart. Thus may poor fools
Believe false teachers: though those that are betray'd
Do feel the treason sharply, yet the traitor
Stands in worse case of woe.
And thou, Posthumus, thou that didst set up
My disobedience 'gainst the King my father
And make me put into contempt the suits
Of princely fellows, shalt hereafter find
It is no act of common passage, but
A strain of rareness: and I grieve myself
To think, when thou shalt be disedg'd by her
That now thou tirest on, how thy memory
Will then be pang'd by me. Prithee, dispatch:
The lamb entreats the butcher: where 's thy knife?

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[57] *Sinon's weeping.* Sinon, a Greek, wounded himself, pretended to desert to the Trojans, made great lamentation, obtained their confidence, and induced them to admit the wooden horse, which contained armed Greeks.

[74] *Against self-slaughter*, etc. Again this assertion. (See *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. 2.) There is no such divine prohibition.

[93] *tirest* = feedest, like a bird of prey.

Thou art too slow to do thy master's bidding,
When I desire it too.
Pis. O gracious lady,
Since I receiv'd command to do this business
I have not slept one wink.
Imo. Do 't, and to bed then.
Pis. I 'll wake mine eye-balls blind first.
Imo. Wherefore then
Didst undertake it? Why hast thou abus'd
So many miles with a pretence? this place?
Mine action and thine own? our horses' labour?
The time inviting thee? the perturb'd court,
For my being absent? whereunto I never
Purpose return. Why hast thou gone so far,
To be unbent when thou hast ta'en thy stand,
The elected deer before thee?
Pis. But to win time
To lose so bad employment; in the which
I have consider'd of a course. Good lady,
Hear me with patience.
Imo. Talk thy tongue weary; speak:
I have heard I am a strumpet; and mine ear,
Therein false struck, can take no greater wound,
Nor tent to bottom that. But speak.
Pis. Then, madam,
I thought you would not back again.
Imo. Most like;
Bringing me here to kill me.
Pis. Not so, neither:
But if I were as wise as honest, then
My purpose would prove well. It cannot be
But that my master is abus'd:
Some villain, ay, and singular in his art,
Hath done you both this cursed injury.
Imo. Some Roman courtezan.
Pis. No, on my life.
I 'll give but notice you are dead and send him
Some bloody sign of it; for 't is commanded
I should do so: you shall be miss'd at court,
And that will well confirm it.
Imo. Why, good fellow,
What shall I do the while? where bide? how live?
Or in my life what comfort, when I am
Dead to my husband?
Pis. If you 'll back to the court—

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114 *tent* = probe.

Imo. No court, no father; nor no more ado
With that harsh, noble, simple nothing,
That Cloten, whose love-suit hath been to me
As fearful as a siege.
Pis. If not at court,
Then not in Britain must you bide.
Imo. Where then?
Hath Britain all the sun that shines? Day, night,
Are they not but in Britain? I' th' world's volume
Our Britain seems as of it, but not in 't;
In a great pool a swan's nest: prithee, think
There 's livers out of Britain.
Pis. I am most glad
You think of other place. The ambassador,
Lucius the Roman, comes to Milford-Haven
To-morrow: now, if you could wear a mind
Dark as your fortune is, and but disguise
That which, to appear itself, must not yet be
But by self-danger, you should tread a course
Pretty and full of view; yea, haply, near
The residence of Posthumus; so nigh at least
That though his actions were not visible, yet
Report should render him hourly to your ear
As truly as he moves.
Imo. O, for such means!
Though peril to my modesty, not death on 't,
I would adventure.
Pis. Well, then, here 's the point:
You must forget to be a woman; change
Command into obedience: fear and niceness —
The handmaids of all women, or, more truly,
Woman its pretty self — into a waggish courage;
Ready in gibes, quick-answer'd, saucy and
As quarrelous as the weasel; nay, you must
Forget that rarest treasure of your cheek,
Exposing it — but, O, the harder heart!
Alack, no remedy! — to the greedy touch
Of common-kissing Titan, and forget
Your laboursome and dainty trims, wherein
You made great Juno angry.
Imo. Nay, be brief:
I see into thy end, and am almost
A man already.

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[146] *Pretty and full of view.* Obscure. Pretty may mean nicely proper; full of view, open. But the passage is very unsatisfactory, and yet not certainly corrupt.

[160] *Exposing it.* In S.'s time gentlewomen commonly wore masks in the open air.

[162] *Titan* = the sun.

Pis. First, make yourself but like one.
Fore-thinking this, I have already fit —
'T is in my cloak-bag — doublet, hat, hose, all
That answer to them: would you in their serving,
And with what imitation you can borrow
From youth of such a season, 'fore noble Lucius
Present yourself, desire his service, tell him
Wherein you 're happy, — which you 'll make him know,
If that his head have ear in music, — doubtless
With joy he will embrace you, for he 's honourable,
And doubling that, most holy. Your means abroad,
You have me, rich; and I will never fail
Beginning nor supplyment.
Imo. Thou art all the comfort
The gods will diet me with. Prithee, away:
There 's more to be consider'd; but we 'll even
All that good time will give us: this attempt
I am soldier to, and will abide it with
A prince's courage. Away, I prithee.
Pis. Well, madam, we must take a short farewell,
Lest, being miss'd, I be suspected of
Your carriage from the court. My noble mistress,
Here is a box: I had it from the Queen:
What 's in 't is precious; if you are sick at sea,
Or stomach-qualm'd at land, a dram of this
Will drive away distemper. To some shade,
And fit you to your manhood. May the gods
Direct you to the best!
Imo. Amen: I thank thee. [*Exeunt, severally.*

Scene V. *A room in* Cymbeline's *palace.*

Enter Cymbeline, Queen, Cloten, Lucius, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Cym. Thus far; and so farewell.
Luc. Thanks, royal sir.
My emperor hath wrote, I must from hence;
And am right sorry that I must report ye
My master's enemy.
Cym. Our subjects, sir,
Will not endure his yoke; and for ourself
To show less sovereignty than they, must needs
Appear unkinglike.
Luc. So, sir: I desire of you
A conduct over-land to Milford-Haven.
Madam, all joy befal your grace!
Queen. And you!

Cym. My lords, you are appointed for that office;
The due of honour in no point omit.
So farewell, noble Lucius.
Luc. Your hand, my lord.
Clo. Receive it friendly; but from this time forth
I wear it as your enemy.
Luc. Sir, the event
Is yet to name the winner: fare you well.
Cym. Leave not the worthy Lucius, good my lords,
Till he have cross'd the Severn. Happiness!
[*Exeunt Lucius and Lords.*
Queen. He goes hence frowning: but it honours us
That we have given him cause.
Clo. 'T is all the better;
Your valiant Britons have their wishes in it.
Cym. Lucius hath wrote already to the Emperor
How it goes here. It fits us therefore ripely
Our chariots and our horsemen be in readiness:
The powers that he already hath in Gallia
Will soon be drawn to head, from whence he moves
His war for Britain.
Queen. 'T is not sleepy business;
But must be look'd to speedily and strongly.
Cym. Our expectation that it would be thus
Hath made us forward. But, my gentle queen,
Where is our daughter? She hath not appear'd
Before the Roman, nor to us hath tender'd
The duty of the day: she looks us like
A thing more made of malice than of duty:
We have noted it. Call her before us; for
We have been too slight in sufferance. [*Exit an Attendant.*
Queen. Royal sir,
Since the exile of Posthumus, most retir'd
Hath her life been; the cure whereof, my lord,
'T is time must do. Beseech your majesty,
Forbear sharp speeches to her: she 's a lady
So tender of rebukes that words are strokes
And strokes death to her.

Re-enter Attendant.

Cym. Where is she, sir? How
Can her contempt be answer'd?
Atten. Please you, sir,
Her chambers are all lock'd; and there 's no answer
That will be given to th' loudest noise we make.
Queen. My lord, when last I went to visit her,
She pray'd me to excuse her keeping close,

Whereto constrain'd by her infirmity,
She should that duty leave unpaid to you,
Which daily she was bound to proffer: this
She wish'd me to make known; but our great court
Made me to blame in memory.
Cym. Her doors lock'd?
Not seen of late? Grant, heavens, that which I fear
Prove false! [*Exit.*
Queen. Son, I say, follow the King.
Clo. That man of hers, Pisanio, her old servant,
I have not seen these two days.
Queen. Go, look after. [*Exit Cloten.*
Pisanio, thou that stand'st so for Posthumus!
He hath a drug of mine; I pray his absence
Proceed by swallowing that, for he believes
It is a thing most precious. But for her,
Where is she gone? Haply, despair hath seiz'd her,
Or, wing'd with fervour of her love, she 's flown
To her desir'd Posthumus: gone she is
To death or to dishonour; and my end
Can make good use of either; she being down,
I have the placing of the British crown.

Re-enter Cloten.

How now, my son!
Clo. 'T is certain she is fled.
Go in and cheer the King: he rages; none
Dare come about him.
Queen. [*Aside.*] All the better: may
This night forestall him of the coming day! [*Exit.*
Clo. I love and hate her: for she 's fair and royal,
And that she hath all courtly parts more exquisite
Than lady, ladies, woman; from every one
The best she hath, and she, of all compounded,
Outsells them all; I love her therefore: but
Disdaining me and throwing favours on
The low Posthumus slanders so her judgement
That what 's else rare is chok'd; and in that point
I will conclude to hate her, nay, indeed,
To be reveng'd upon her. For when fools
Shall —

Enter Pisanio.

Who is here? What, are you packing, sirrah?
Come hither: ah, you precious pandar! Villain,

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[72] *Than lady*, etc. A confused and obscure passage, of which no explanation worth mentioning has been offered.
[80] *packing* = going off, getting out of the way.

Where is thy lady? In a word; or else
Thou art straightway with the fiends.
Pis. O, good my lord!
Clo. Where is thy lady? or, by Jupiter,—
I will not ask again. Close villain,
I 'll have this secret from thy heart, or rip
Thy heart to find it. Is she with Posthumus?
From whose so many weights of baseness cannot
A dram of worth be drawn.
Pis. Alas, my lord,
How can she be with him? When was she miss'd?
He is in Rome.
Clo. Where is she, sir? Come nearer;
No further halting: satisfy me home
What is become of her.
Pis. O, my all-worthy lord!
Clo. All-worthy villain!
Discover where thy mistress is at once,
At the next word: no more of worthy lord!
Speak, or thy silence on the instant is
Thy condemnation and thy death.
Pis. Then, sir,
This paper is the history of my knowledge
Touching her flight. [*Presenting a letter.*
Clo. Let 's see 't. I will pursue her
Even to Augustus' throne.
Pis. [*Aside.*] Or this, or perish.
She 's far enough; and what he learns by this
May prove his travel, not her danger.
Clo. Hum!
Pis. [*Aside.*] I 'll write to my lord she 's dead. O Imogen,
Safe mayst thou wander, safe return again!
Clo. Sirrah, is this letter true?
Pis. Sir, as I think.

Clo. It is Posthumus' hand; I know 't. Sirrah, if thou wouldst not be a villain, but do me true service, undergo those employments wherein I should have cause to use thee with a serious industry, that is, what villany so'er I bid thee do, to perform it directly and truly, I would think thee an honest man: thou shouldst neither want my means for thy relief nor my voice for thy preferment.

Pis. Well, my good lord.

Clo. Wilt thou serve me? for since patiently and constantly thou hast stuck to the bare fortune of that beggar Posthumus, thou canst not, in the course of gratitude, but be a diligent follower of mine: wilt thou serve me?

Pis. Sir, I will.

Clo. Give me thy hand; here 's my purse. Hast any of thy late master's garments in thy possession?

Pis. I have, my lord, at my lodging, the same suit he wore when he took leave of my lady and mistress.

Clo. The first service thou dost me, fetch that suit hither: let it be thy first service; go.

Pis. I shall, my lord. [*Exit.*

Clo. Meet thee at Milford-Haven! — I forgot to ask him one thing; I 'll remember 't anon: — even there, thou villain Posthumus, will I kill thee. I would these garments were come. She said upon a time — the bitterness of it I now belch from my heart — that she held the very garment of Posthumus in more respect than my noble and natural person, together with the adornment of my qualities. With that suit upon my back, will I ravish her: first kill him, and in her eyes; there shall she see my valour, which will then be a torment to her contempt. He on the ground, my speech of insultment ended on his dead body, and when my lust hath dined, — which, as I say, to vex her I will execute in the clothes that she so prais'd, — to the court I 'll knock her back, foot her home again. She hath despis'd me rejoicingly, and I 'll be merry in my revenge.

Re-enter Pisanio, *with the clothes.*

Be those the garments?

Pis. Ay, my noble lord.

Clo. How long is 't since she went to Milford-Haven?

Pis. She can scarce be there yet.

Clo. Bring this apparel to my chamber; that is the second thing that I have commanded thee: the third is, that thou wilt be a voluntary mute to my design. Be but duteous, and true preferment shall tender itself to thee. My revenge is now at Milford: would I had wings to follow it! Come, and be true. [*Exit.*

Pis. Thou bid'st me to my loss: for true to thee
Were to prove false, which I will never be,
To him that is most true. To Milford go,
And find not her whom thou pursuest. Flow, flow,
You heavenly blessings, on her! This fool's speed
Be cross'd with slowness; labour be his meed! [*Exit*

Scene VI. *Wales. Before the cave of* Belarius.

Enter Imogen, *in boy's clothes.*

Imo. I see a man's life is a tedious one:
I have tir'd myself, and for two nights together
Have made the ground my bed. I should be sick,

---

135 *In her eyes* = in her sight.

But that my resolution helps me. Milford,
When from the mountain-top Pisanio show'd thee,
Thou wast within a ken: O Jove! I think
Foundations fly the wretched; such, I mean,
Where they should be reliev'd. Two beggars told me
I could not miss my way: will poor folks lie,
That have afflictions on them, knowing 't is
A punishment or trial? Yes; no wonder,
When rich ones scarce tell true. To lapse in fulness
Is sorer than to lie for need; and falsehood
Is worse in kings than beggars. My dear lord!
Thou art one o' th' false ones. Now I think on thee,
My hunger 's gone; but even before, I was
At point to sink for food. But what is this?
Here is a path to 't: 't is some savage hold:
I were best not call; I dare not call: yet famine,
Ere clean it o'erthrow nature, makes it valiant.
Plenty and peace breeds cowards: hardness ever
Of hardiness is mother. Ho! who 's here?
If any thing that 's civil, speak; if savage,
Take or lend. Ho! No answer? Then I 'll enter.
Best draw my sword; and if mine enemy
But fear the sword like me, he 'll scarcely look on 't.
Such a foe, good heavens! [*Exit, to the cave.*

Enter BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. You, Polydore, have prov'd best woodman and
Are master of the feast: Cadwal and I
Will play the cook and servant; 't is our match;
The sweat of industry would dry and die,
But for the end it works to. Come; our stomachs
Will make what 's homely savoury: weariness
Can snore upon the flint, when resty sloth
Finds the down pillow hard. Now peace be here,
Poor house, that keep'st thyself!
Gui. I am throughly weary.
Arv. I am weak with toil, yet strong in appetite.
Gui. There is cold meat i' th' cave; we 'll browse on that,
Whilst what we have kill'd be cook'd.
Bel. [*Looking into the cave.*] Stay; come not in.
But that it eats our victuals, I should think
Here were a fairy.
Gui. What 's the matter, sir?
Bel. By Jupiter, an angel! or, if not,
An earthly paragon! Behold divineness
No elder than a boy!

Re-enter IMOGEN.

Imo. Good masters, harm me not:
Before I enter'd here, I call'd; and thought
To have begg'd or bought what I have took: good troth,
I have stol'n nought, nor would not, though I had found
Gold strew'd i' th' floor. Here 's money for my meat:
I would have left it on the board so soon
As I had made my meal, and parted
With prayers for the provider.
Gui. Money, youth?
Arv. All gold and silver rather turn to dirt!
As 't is no better reckon'd, but of those
Who worship dirty gods.
Imo. I see you 're angry:
Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should
Have died had I not made it.
Bel. Whither bound?
Imo. To Milford-Haven.
Bel. What 's your name?
Imo. Fidele, sir. I have a kinsman who
Is bound for Italy; he embark'd at Milford;
To whom being going, almost spent with hunger,
I am fall'n in this offence.
Bel. Prithee, fair youth,
Think us no churls, nor measure our good minds
By this rude place we live in. Well encounter'd!
'T is almost night: you shall have better cheer
Ere you depart; and thanks to stay and eat it.
Boys, bid him welcome.
Gui. Were you a woman, youth,
I should woo hard but be your groom. In honesty,
I bid for you as I 'ld buy.
Arv. I 'll make 't my comfort
He is a man; I 'll love him as my brother:
And such a welcome as I 'ld give to him
After long absence, such is yours: most welcome!
Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.
Imo. 'Mongst friends,
If brothers. [*Aside.*] Would it had been so, that they
Had been my father's sons! then had my prize
Been less, and so more equal ballasting
To thee, Posthumus.
Bel. He wrings at some distress.
Gui. Would I could free 't!
Arv. Or I, whate'er it be,
What pain it cost, what danger. Gods!

74 *be sprightly* = be in good spirits.

Bel. Hark, boys. [*Whispering.*
Imo. Great men,
That had a court no bigger than this cave,
That did attend themselves and had the virtue
Which their own conscience seal'd them — laying by
That nothing-gift of differing multitudes —
Could not out-peer these twain. Pardon me, gods!
I 'ld change my sex to be companion with them,
Since Leonatus false.
Bel. It shall be so.
Boys, we 'll go dress our hunt. Fair youth, come in:
Discourse is heavy, fasting; when we have supp'd,
We 'll mannerly demand thee of thy story,
So far as thou wilt speak it.
Gui. Pray, draw near.
Arv. The night to the owl and morn to the lark less welcome.
Imo. Thanks, sir.
Arv. I pray, draw near. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *Rome. A public place.*

Enter two Senators *and* Tribunes.

First Sen. This is the tenour of the Emperor's writ:
That since the common men are now in action
'Gainst the Pannonians and Dalmatians,
And that the legions now in Gallia are
Full weak to undertake our wars against
The fall'n-off Britons, that we do incite
The gentry to this business. He creates
Lucius proconsul: and to you the tribunes,
For this immediate levy, he commends
His absolute commission. Long live Cæsar!
First Tri. Is Lucius general of the forces?
Sec. Sen. Ay.
First Tri. Remaining now in Gallia?
First Sen. With those legions
Which I have spoke of, whereunto your levy
Must be supplyant: the words of your commission
Will tie you to the numbers and the time
Of their dispatch.
First Tri. We will discharge our duty. [*Exeunt.*

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[88] *Since Leonatus false* = Since Leonatus is false.

[91] *demand thee of thy story:* a construction common in S.'s day. We now should write, "demand of thee."

ACT IV.

Scene I. *Wales. Near the cave of* Belarius.

Enter Cloten.

Clo. I am near to the place where they should meet, if Pisanio have mapp'd it truly. How fit his garments serve me! Why should his mistress, who was made by him that made the tailor, not be fit too? the rather — saving reverence of the word — for 't is said a woman's fitness comes by fits. Therein I must play the workman. I dare speak it to myself — for it is not vain-glory for a man and his glass to confer in his own chamber — I mean, the lines of my body are as well drawn as his; no less young, more strong, not beneath him in fortunes, beyond him in the advantage of the time, above him in birth, alike conversant in general services, and more remarkable in single oppositions: yet this imperceiverant thing loves him in my despite. What mortality is! Posthumus, thy head, which now is growing upon thy shoulders, shall within this hour be off; thy mistress enforced; thy garments cut to pieces before thy face: and all this done, spurn her home to her father; who may haply be a little angry for my so rough usage; but my mother, having power of his testiness, shall turn all into my commendations. My horse is tied up safe: out, sword, and to a sore purpose! Fortune, put them into my hand! This is the very description of their meeting-place; and the fellow dares not deceive me. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *Before the cave of* Belarius.

Enter, from the cave, Belarius, Guiderius, Arviragus, *and* Imogen.

Bel. [*To Imogen.*] You are not well: remain here in the cave;
We 'll come to you after hunting.
Arv. [*To Imogen.*] Brother, stay here:
Are we not brothers?
Imo. So man and man should be;
But clay and clay differs in dignity,
Whose dust is both alike. I am very sick.
Gui. Go you to hunting; I 'll abide with him.
Imo. So sick I am not, yet I am not well;
But not so citizen a wanton as

---

11 *general services* = services in the common cause.
12 *single oppositions* = single combats, duels.
8 *so citizen a wanton* = such a town-bred weakling.

To seem to die ere sick: so please you, leave me;
Stick to your journal course: the breach of custom
Is breach of all. I am ill, but your being by me
Cannot amend me; society is no comfort
To one not sociable: I am not very sick,
Since I can reason of it. Pray you, trust me here:
I 'll rob none but myself; and let me die,
Stealing so poorly.
Gui. I love thee; I have spoke it:
How much the quantity, the weight as much,
As I do love my father.
Bel. What! how! how!
Arv. If it be sin to say so, sir, I yoke me
In my good brother's fault: I know not why
I love this youth; and I have heard you say,
Love's reason 's without reason: the bier at door,
And a demand who is 't shall die, I 'ld say
My father, not this youth.
Bel. [*Aside.*] O noble strain!
O worthiness of nature! breed of greatness!
Cowards father cowards and base things sire base:
Nature hath meal and bran, contempt and grace.
I 'm not their father; yet who this should be,
Doth miracle itself, lov'd before me.
'T is the ninth hour o' th' morn.
Arv. Brother, farewell.
Imo. I wish ye sport.
Arv. You health. So please you, sir.
Imo. [*Aside.*] These are kind creatures. Gods, what lies I have heard!
Our courtiers say all 's savage but at court:
Experience, O, thou disprov'st report!
The imperious seas breed monsters; for the dish
Poor tributary rivers as sweet fish.
I am sick still; heart-sick. Pisanio,
I 'll now taste of thy drug. [*Swallows some.*
Gui. I could not stir him:
He said he was gentle, but unfortunate;
Dishonestly afflicted, but yet honest.
Arv. Thus did he answer me: yet said, hereafter
I might know more.
Bel. To th' field, to th' field!
We 'll leave you for this time: go in and rest.
Arv. We 'll not be long away.

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[10] *journal* = daily.
[39] *gentle* = a gentleman by birth; see lines 47, 48.

Bel. Pray, be not sick,
For you must be our housewife.
Imo. Well or ill,
I am bound to you.
Bel. And shalt be ever. [*Exit Imogen, to the cave.*
This youth, howe'er distress'd, appears he hath had
Good ancestors.
Arv. How angel-like he sings!
Gui. But his neat cookery! he cut our roots
In characters,
And sauc'd our broths, as Juno had been sick
And he her dieter.
Arv. Nobly he yokes
A smiling with a sigh, as if the sigh
Was that it was, for not being such a smile;
The smile mocking the sigh, that it would fly
From so divine a temple, to commix
With winds that sailors rail at.
Gui. I do note
That grief and patience, rooted in him both,
Mingle their spurs together.
Arv. Grow, patience!
And let the stinking elder, grief, untwine
His perishing root with the increasing vine!
Bel. It is great morning. Come, away! — Who 's there?

Enter Cloten.

Clo. I cannot find those runagates; that villain
Hath mock'd me. I am faint.
Bel. Those runagates!
Means he not us? I partly know him: 't is
Cloten, the son o' th' Queen. I fear some ambush.
I saw him not these many years, and yet
I know 't is he. We are held as outlaws: hence!
Gui. He is but one: you and my brother search
What companies are near: pray you, away;
Let me alone with him. [*Exeunt Belarius and Arviragus.*
Clo. Soft! What are you
That fly me thus? some villain mountaineers?
I have heard of such. What slave art thou?
Gui. A thing
More slavish did I ne'er than answering
A "slave" without a knock.
Clo. Thou art a robber,
A law-breaker, a villain: yield thee, thief.
Gui. To who? to thee? What art thou? Have not I
An arm as big as thine? a heart as big?

Thy words, I grant, are bigger; for I wear not
My dagger in my mouth. Say what thou art,
Why I should yield to thee?
Clo. Thou villain base,
Know'st me not by my clothes?
Gui. No, nor thy tailor, rascal,
Who is thy grandfather: he made those clothes,
Which, as it seems, make thee.
Clo. Thou precious varlet,
My tailor made them not.
Gui. Hence, then, and thank
The man that gave them thee. Thou art some fool;
I am loath to beat thee.
Clo. Thou injurious thief,
Hear but my name, and tremble.
Gui. What 's thy name?
Clo. Cloten, thou villain.
Gui. Cloten, thou double villain, be thy name,
I cannot tremble at it: were it Toad, or Adder, Spider,
'T would move me sooner.
Clo. To thy further fear,
Nay, to thy mere confusion, thou shalt know
I am son to the Queen.
Gui. I am sorry for 't; not seeming
So worthy as thy birth.
Clo. Art not afeard?
Gui. Those that I reverence those I fear, the wise:
At fools I laugh, not fear them.
Clo. Die the death:
When I have slain thee with my proper hand,
I 'll follow those that even now fled hence,
And on the gates of Lud's-town set your heads:
Yield, rustic mountaineer. [*Exeunt, fighting.*

Re-enter BELARIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS.

Bel. No companies abroad?
Arv. None in the world: you did mistake him, sure.
Bel. I cannot tell: long is it since I saw him,
But time hath nothing blurr'd those lines of favour
Which then he wore; the snatches in his voice,
And burst of speaking, were as his: I am absolute
'T was very Cloten.
Arv. In this place we left them:
I wish my brother make good time with him,
You say he is so fell.
Bel. Being scarce made up,
I mean, to man, he had not apprehension

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100 *Lud's-town* = London.

Of roaring terrors; for the effect of judgement
Is oft the cause of fear. But, see, thy brother.

Re-enter Guiderius, *with* Cloten's *head.*

Gui. This Cloten was a fool, an empty purse;
There was no money in 't: not Hercules
Could have knock'd out his brains, for he had none:
Yet I not doing this, the fool had borne
My head as I do his.
Bel. What hast thou done?
Gui. I am perfect what: cut off one Cloten's head,
Son to the Queen, after his own report;
Who call'd me traitor, mountaineer, and swore
With his own single hand he 'ld take us in,
Displace our heads where — thank the gods! — they grow,
And set them on Lud's-town.
Bel. We are all undone.
Gui. Why, worthy father, what have we to lose,
But that he swore to take, our lives? The law
Protects not us: then why should we be tender
To let an arrogant piece of flesh threat us,
Play judge and executioner all himself,
For we do fear the law? What company
Discover you abroad?
Bel. No single soul
Can we set eye on; but in all safe reason
He must have some attendants. Though his humour
Was nothing but mutation, ay, and that
From one bad thing to worse; not frenzy, not
Absolute madness could so far have rav'd
To bring him here alone; although perhaps
It may be heard at court that such as we
Cave here, hunt here, are outlaws, and in time
May make some stronger head; the which he hearing —
As it is like him — might break out, and swear
He 'ld fetch us in; yet is 't not probable
To come alone, either he so undertaking,
Or they so suffering: then on good ground we fear,
If we do fear this body hath a tail
More perilous than the head.
Arv. Let ordinance
Come as the gods foresay it: howsoe'er,
My brother hath done well.
Bel. I had no mind
To hunt this day: the boy Fidele's sickness
Did make my way long forth.

---

142 *fetch us in* = capture us, make us prisoners.
146 *ordinance* = that which is ordained to happen.

Gui. With his own sword,
Which he did wave against my throat, I have ta'en
His head from him: I 'll throw 't into the creek
Behind our rock; and let it to the sea,
And tell the fishes he 's the Queen's son, Cloten:
That 's all I reck. [*Exit.*
Bel. I fear 't will be reveng'd:
Would, Polydore, thou hadst not done 't! though valour
Becomes thee well enough.
Arv. Would I had done 't,
So the revenge alone pursued me! Polydore,
I love thee brotherly, but envy much
Thou hast robb'd me of this deed: I would revenges,
That possible strength might meet, would seek us through
And put us to our answer.
Bel. Well, 't is done:
We 'll hunt no more to-day, nor seek for danger
Where there 's no profit. I prithee, to our rock;
You and Fidele play the cooks: I 'll stay
Till hasty Polydore return, and bring him
To dinner presently.
Arv. Poor sick Fidele!
I 'll willingly to him: to gain his colour
I 'ld let a parish of such Clotens blood,
And praise myself for charity. [*Exit.*
Bel. O thou goddess,
Thou divine Nature, how thyself thou blazon'st
In these two princely boys! They are as gentle
As zephyrs blowing below the violet,
Not wagging his sweet head; and yet as rough,
Their royal blood enchaf'd, as the rud'st wind,
That by the top doth take the mountain pine,
And make him stoop to th' vale. 'T is wonder
That an invisible instinct should frame them
To royalty unlearn'd, honour untaught,
Civility not seen from other, valour
That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop
As if it had been sow'd. Yet still it 's strange
What Cloten's being here to us portends,
Or what his death will bring us.

Re-enter GUIDERIUS.

Gui. Where 's my brother?
I have sent Cloten's clotpoll down the stream,
In embassy to his mother: his body 's hostage
For his return. [*Solemn music.*
Bel. My ingenious instrument!

Hark, Polydore, it sounds! But what occasion
Hath Cadwal now to give it motion? Hark!
Gui. Is he at home?
Bel. He went hence even now.
Gui. What does he mean? since death of my dear'st mother
It did not speak before. All solemn things
Should answer solemn accidents. The matter?
Triumphs for nothing and lamenting toys
Is jollity for apes and grief for boys.
Is Cadwal mad?
Bel. Look, here he comes,
And brings the dire occasion in his arms
Of what we blame him for.

Re-enter Arviragus, *with* Imogen, *as dead, bearing her in his arms.*

Arv. The bird is dead
That we have made so much on. I had rather
Have skipp'd from sixteen years of age to sixty,
To have turn'd my leaping-time into a crutch,
Than have seen this.
Gui. O sweetest, fairest lily!
My brother wears thee not the one half so well
As when thou grew'st thyself.
Bel. O melancholy!
Who ever yet could sound thy bottom? find
The ooze, to show what coast thy sluggish crare
Might easil'est harbour in? Thou blessed thing!
Jove knows what man thou mightst have made; but I,
Thou diedst, a most rare boy, of melancholy.
How found you him?
Arv. Stark, as you see:
Thus smiling, as some fly had tickled slumber,
Not as death's dart, being laugh'd at; his right cheek
Reposing on a cushion.
Gui. Where?
Arv. O' th' floor;
His arms thus leagued: I thought he slept, and put
My clouted brogues from off my feet, whose rudeness
Answer'd my steps too loud.
Gui. Why, he but sleeps:
If he be gone, he 'll make his grave a bed;
With female fairies will his tomb be haunted,
And worms will not come to thee.
Arv. With fairest flowers
Whilst summer lasts and I live here, Fidele,
I 'll sweeten thy sad grave: thou shalt not lack

216 *crare* = a small clumsy boat.
219 *come to thee* = a mere heedless change of person.

The flower that 's like thy face, pale primrose, nor
The azured harebell, like thy veins, no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
Out-sweeten'd not thy breath: the ruddock would,
With charitable bill, — O bill, sore-shaming
Those rich-left heirs that let their fathers lie
Without a monument! — bring thee all this;
Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-ground thy corse.
Gui. Prithee, have done;
And do not play in wench-like words with that
Which is so serious. Let us bury him,
And not protract with admiration what
Is now due debt. To the grave!
Arv. Say, where shall 's lay him?
Gui. By good Euriphile, our mother.
Arv. Be 't so:
And let us, Polydore, though now our voices
Have got the mannish crack, sing him to th' ground,
As once our mother; use like note and words,
Save that Euriphile must be Fidele.
Gui. Cadwal,
I cannot sing: I 'll weep, and word it with thee;
For notes of sorrow out of tune are worse
Than priests and fanes that lie.
Arv. We 'll speak it, then.
Bel. Great griefs, I see, med'cine the less; for Cloten
Is quite forgot. He was a queen's son, boys;
And though he came our enemy, remember
He was paid for that: though mean and mighty, rotting
Together, have one dust, yet reverence,
That angel of the world, doth make distinction
Of place 'tween high and low. Our foe was princely;
And though you took his life, as being our foe,
Yet bury him as a prince.
Gui. Pray you, fetch him hither.
Thersites' body is as good as Ajax',
When neither are alive.
Arv. If you 'll go fetch him,
We 'll say our song the whilst. Brother, begin. [*Exit Belarius.*
Gui. Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to th' east;
My father hath a reason for 't.

---

225 *ruddock* = redbreast.
234 *shall 's* = shall us; recklessly used instead of *shall we*, for rhythm's sake.
253 *Thersites* = a foul-mouthed Greek slave; *Ajax*, a thick-headed Greek champion.
256 *his head to th' east.* There were various superstitious notions about the direction of graves and the position of the bodies buried in them; but it has not yet been discovered what reason S. had in mind as Belarius's for the laying of Imogen with her head to the east.

Arv. 'T is true.
Gui. Come on then, and remove him.
Arv. So. Begin.

SONG.

Gui. Fear no more the heat o' th' sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Arv. Fear no more the frown o' th' great;
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Gui. Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Arv. Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Gui. Fear not slander, censure rash;
Arv. Thou hast finish'd joy and moan:
Both. All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

Gui. No exorciser harm thee!
Arv. Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Gui. Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
Arv. Nothing ill come near thee!
Both. Quiet consummation have;
And renowned be thy grave!

Re-enter BELARIUS, *with the body of* CLOTEN.

Gui. We have done our obsequies: come, lay him down.
Bel. Here 's a few flowers; but 'bout midnight, more:
The herbs that have on them cold dew o' the night
Are strewings fitt'st for graves. Upon their faces.
You were as flowers, now wither'd: even so
These herblets shall, which we upon you strew.
Come on, away: apart upon our knees.
The ground that gave them first has them again:
Their pleasures here are past, so is their pain.
[*Exeunt Belarius, Guiderius, and Arviragus.*

Imo. [*Awaking.*] Yes, sir, to Milford-Haven; which is the way?—
I thank you.—By yond bush?—Pray, how far thither?
'Ods pittikins! can it be six mile yet?
I have gone all night. 'Faith, I 'll lie down and sleep.

---

259 *Fear no more*, etc. I cannot accept this song as S.'s. See Shakespeare's *Scholar*. It is probably by the writer of the Vision in Act V.
272 *thunder-stone*. We say thunder-bolt.
277 *exorciser* = magician.

But, soft! no bedfellow! — O gods and goddesses!
[*Seeing the body of Cloten.*
These flowers are like the pleasures of the world;
This bloody man, the care on 't. I hope I dream;
For so I thought I was a cave-keeper,
And cook to honest creatures: but 't is not so;
'T was but a bolt of nothing, shot at nothing,
Which the brain makes of fumes: our very eyes
Are sometimes like our judgements, blind. Good faith,
I tremble still with fear: but if there be
Yet left in heaven as small a drop of pity
As a wren's eye, fear'd gods, a part of it!
The dream 's here still: even when I wake, it is
Without me, as within me; not imagined, felt.
A headless man! The garments of Posthumus!
I know the shape of 's leg: this is his hand;
His foot Mercurial; his Martial thigh;
The brawns of Hercules: but his Jovial face —
Murther in heaven? — How! — 'T is gone. Pisanio,
All curses madded Hecuba gave the Greeks,
And mine to boot, be darted on thee! Thou,
Conspir'd with that irregulous devil, Cloten,
Hast here cut off my lord. To write and read
Be henceforth treacherous! Damn'd Pisanio
Hath with his forged letters, — damn'd Pisanio —
From this most bravest vessel of the world
Struck the main-top! O Posthumus! alas,
Where is thy head? where 's that? Ay me! where 's that?
Pisanio might have kill'd thee at the heart,
And left this head on. How should this be? Pisanio?
'T is he and Cloten: malice and lucre in them
Have laid this woe here. O, 't is pregnant, pregnant!
The drug he gave me, which he said was precious
And cordial to me, have I not found it
Murd'rous to th' senses? That confirms it home:
This is Pisanio's deed, and Cloten's: O!
Give colour to my pale cheek with thy blood,
That we the horrider may seem to those
Which chance to find us: O, my lord, my lord! [*Falls on the body.*

Enter LUCIUS, *a* Captain *and other* Officers, *and a* Soothsayer.

Cap. To them the legions garrison'd in Gallia,
After your will, have cross'd the sea, attending
You here at Milford-Haven with your ships:
They are in readiness.

---

311 *Martial* = like Mars.
316 *irregulous* = without order, indecent, debauched.
326 *pregnant* = full, — of meaning, understood.

Luc. But what from Rome?
Cap. The senate hath stirr'd up the confiners
And gentlemen of Italy, most willing spirits,
That promise noble service: and they come
Under the conduct of bold Iachimo,
Syenna's brother.
Luc. When expect you them?
Cap. With the next benefit o' th' wind.
Luc. This forwardness
Makes our hopes fair. Command our present numbers
Be muster'd; bid the captains look to 't. Now, sir,
What have you dream'd of late of this war's purpose?
Sooth. Last night the very gods show'd me a vision —
I fast and pray'd for their intelligence — thus:
I saw Jove's bird, the Roman eagle, wing'd
From the spongy south to this part of the west,
There vanish'd in the sunbeams: which portends —
Unless my sins abuse my divination —
Success to the Roman host.
Luc. Dream often so,
And never false. Soft, ho! what trunk is here
Without his top? The ruin speaks that sometime
It was a worthy building. How! a page!
Or dead, or sleeping on him? But dead rather;
For nature doth abhor to make his bed
With the defunct, or sleep upon the dead.
Let 's see the boy's face.
Cap. He 's alive, my lord.
Luc. He 'll then instruct us of this body. Young one,
Inform us of thy fortunes, for it seems
They crave to be demanded. Who is this
Thou mak'st thy bloody pillow? Or who was he
That, otherwise than noble nature did,
Hath alter'd that good picture? What 's thy interest
In this sad wrack? How came it? Who is it?
What art thou?
Imo. I am nothing: or if not,
Nothing to be were better. This was my master,
A very valiant Briton and a good,
That here by mountaineers lies slain. Alas!
There is no more such masters: I may wander
From east to occident, cry out for service,
Try many, all good, serve truly, never
Find such another master.

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[338] *confiners* may mean borderers, those dwelling on the confines; but the coupling of it with gentlemen makes the soundness of the text doubtful.
[348] *I fast* = did fast, fasted.

Luc. 'Lack, good youth!
Thou mov'st no less with thy complaining than
Thy master in bleeding: say his name, good friend.
Imo. Richard du Champ. [*Aside.*] If I do lie and do
No harm by it, though the gods hear, I hope
They 'll pardon it. — Say you, sir?
Luc. Thy name?
Imo. Fidele, sir.
Luc. Thou dost approve thyself the very same:
Thy name well fits thy faith, thy faith thy name.
Wilt take thy chance with me? I will not say
Thou shalt be so well master'd, but, be sure,
No less belov'd. The Roman emperor's letters,
Sent by a consul to me, should not sooner
Than thine own worth prefer thee: go with me.
Imo. I 'll follow, sir. But first, an 't please the gods,
I 'll hide my master from the flies, as deep
As these poor pickaxes can dig; and when
With wild wood-leaves and weeds I ha' strew'd his grave,
And on it said a century of prayers,
Such as I can, twice o'er, I 'll weep and sigh;
And leaving so his service, follow you,
So please you entertain me.
Luc. Ay, good youth;
And rather father thee than master thee.
My friends,
The boy hath taught us manly duties: let us
Find out the prettiest daisied plot we can,
And make him with our pikes and partisans
A grave: come, arm him. Boy, he is preferr'd
By thee to us, and he shall be interr'd
As soldiers can. Be cheerful; wipe thine eyes:
Some falls are means the happier to arise. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A room in* CYMBELINE'S *palace.*

Enter CYMBELINE, Lords, PISANIO, *and* Attendants.

Cym. Again; and bring me word how 't is with her.
[*Exit an Attendant.*
A fever with the absence of her son,
A madness, of which her life 's in danger. Heavens,
How deeply you at once do touch me! Imogen,
The great part of my comfort, gone; my queen
Upon a desperate bed, and in a time

---

378 *Richard du Champ.* This name caps the climax of the chronological confusion and ethnological medley in this play. It passes understanding. What matter?
401 *arm him* = raise him on your arms.

When fearful wars point at me; her son gone,
So needful for this present: it strikes me, past
The hope of comfort. But for thee, fellow,
Who needs must know of her departure and
Dost seem so ignorant, we 'll enforce it from thee
By a sharp torture.
Pis. Sir, my life is yours;
I humbly set it at your will; but, for my mistress,
I nothing know where she remains, why gone,
Nor when she purposes return. Beseech your highness,
Hold me your loyal servant.
First Lord. Good my liege,
The day that she was missing he was here:
I dare be bound he 's true and shall perform
All parts of his subjection loyally. For Cloten,
There wants no diligence in seeking him,
And will, no doubt, be found.
Cym. The time is troublesome.
[*To Pisanio.*] We 'll slip you for a season; but our jealousy
Does yet depend.
First Lord. So please your majesty,
The Roman legions, all from Gallia drawn,
Are landed on your coast, with a supply
Of Roman gentlemen, by the senate sent.
Cym. Now for the counsel of my son and queen!
I am amaz'd with matter.
First Lord. Good my liege,
Your preparation can affront no less
Than what you hear of: come more, for more you 're ready:
The want is but to put those powers in motion
That long to move.
Cym. I thank you. Let 's withdraw;
And meet the time as it seeks us. We fear not
What can from Italy annoy us; but
We grieve at chances here. Away! [*Exeunt all but Pisanio.*
Pis. I heard no letter from my master since
I wrote him Imogen was slain: 't is strange:
Nor hear I from my mistress, who did promise
To yield me often tidings; neither know I
What is betid to Cloten; but remain
Perplex'd in all. The heavens still must work.
Wherein I am false I am honest; not true, to be true.
These present wars shall find I love my country,
Even to the note o' th' King, or I 'll fall in them.
All other doubts, by time let them be clear'd:
Fortune brings in some boats that are not steer'd. [*Exit*

---

21 *And will:* heedlessly written for, And he will.

Scene IV. *Wales: before the cave of* Belarius.

Enter Belarius, Guiderius, *and* Arviragus.

Gui. The noise is round about us.
Bel. Let us from it.
Arv. What pleasure, sir, find we in life, to lock it
From action and adventure?
Gui. Nay, what hope
Have we in hiding us? This way, the Romans
Must or for Britons slay us, or receive us
For barbarous and unnatural revolts
During their use, and slay us after.
Bel. Sons,
We 'll higher to the mountains; there secure us.
To the King's party there 's no going: newness
Of Cloten's death — we being not known, not muster'd
Among the bands — may drive us to a render
Where we have liv'd, and so extort from 's that
Which we have done, whose answer would be death
Drawn on with torture.
Gui. This is, sir, a doubt
In such a time nothing becoming you,
Nor satisfying us.
Arv. It is not likely
That when they hear the Roman horses neigh,
Behold their quarter'd fires, have both their eyes
And ears so cloy'd importantly as now,
That they will waste their time upon our note,
To know from whence we are.
Bel. O, I am known
Of many in the army. Many years,
Though Cloten then but young, you see, not wore him
From my remembrance. And, besides, the King
Hath not deserv'd my service nor your loves,
Who find in my exile the want of breeding,
The certainty of this hard life; aye hopeless
To have the courtesy your cradle promis'd,
But to be still hot summer's tanlings and
The shrinking slaves of winter.
Gui. Than be so
Better to cease to be. Pray, sir, to th' army:
I and my brother are not known; yourself
So out of thought, and thereto so o'ergrown,
Cannot be question'd.

---

22 *Many years*, etc. This passage is not corrupt. It is merely a model example of what S. would do, by ellipsis and transposition, in defiance of logical connection.

Arv. By this sun that shines,
I 'll thither: what thing is it that I never
Did see man die! scarce ever look'd on blood,
But that of coward hares, hot goats, and venison!
Never bestrid a horse, save one that had
A rider like myself, who ne'er wore rowel
Nor iron on his heel! I am asham'd
To look upon the holy sun, to have
The benefit of his blest beams, remaining
So long a poor unknown.
Gui. By heavens, I 'll go:
If you will bless me, sir, and give me leave,
I 'll take the better care; but if you will not,
The hazard therefore due fall on me by
The hands of Romans!
Arv. So say I: amen.
Bel. No reason I, since of your lives you set
So slight a valuation, should reserve
My crack'd one to more care. Have with you, boys!
If in your country wars you chance to die,
That is my bed too, lads, and there I 'll lie:
Lead, lead. [*Aside.*] The time seems long; their blood thinks scorn,
Till it fly out and show them princes born. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I. *Britain. The Roman camp.*

Enter Posthumus, *with a bloody handkerchief.*

Post. Yea, bloody cloth, I 'll keep thee, for I wish'd
Thou shouldst be colour'd thus. You married ones,
If each of you should take this course, how many
Must murther wives much better than themselves
For wrying but a little! O Pisanio!
Every good servant does not all commands:
No bond but to do just ones. Gods! if you
Should have ta'en vengeance on my faults, I never
Had liv'd to put on this: so had you sav'd
The noble Imogen to repent, and struck
Me, wretch more worth your vengeance. But, alack,
You snatch some hence for little faults; that 's love,
To have them fall no more: you some permit
To second ills with ills, each elder worse,

---

[14] *each elder worse.* It would seem that S., by a strange misapprehension, must have regarded the second ill as the elder. But possibly we should read "each *ill the* worse."

And make them dread it, to the doers' thrift.
But Imogen is your own: do your best wills,
And make me blest to obey! I am brought hither
Among the Italian gentry, and to fight
Against my lady's kingdom: 't is enough
That, Britain, I have kill'd thy mistress; peace!
I 'll give no wound to thee. Therefore, good heavens,
Hear patiently my purpose: I 'll disrobe me
Of these Italian weeds and suit myself
As does a Briton peasant: so I 'll fight
Against the part I come with; so I 'll die
For thee, O Imogen, even for whom my life
Is every breath a death; and thus, unknown,
Pitied nor hated, to the face of peril
Myself I 'll dedicate. Let me make men know
More valour in me than my habits show.
Gods, put the strength o' th' Leonati in me!
To shame the guise o' th' world, I will begin
The fashion, less without and more within. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *Field of battle between the British and Roman camps.*

Enter, from one side, Lucius, Iachimo, *and the* Roman Army; *from the other side, the* British Army, Leonatus Posthumus *following, like a poor soldier. They march over and go out. Then enter again, in skirmish,* Iachimo *and* Posthumus: *he vanquisheth and disarmeth* Iachimo, *and then leaves him.*

Iach. The heaviness and guilt within my bosom
Takes off my manhood: I have belied a lady,
The Princess of this country, and the air on 't
Revengingly enfeebles me; or could this carl,
A very drudge of nature's, have subdu'd me
In my profession? Knighthoods and honours, borne
As I wear mine, are titles but of scorn.
If that thy gentry, Britain, go before
This lout as he exceeds our lords, the odds
Is that we scarce are men and you are gods. [*Exit.*

The battle continues; the Britons *fly;* Cymbeline *is taken: then enter, to his rescue,* Belarius, Guiderius, *and* Arviragus.

Bel. Stand, stand! We have the advantage of the ground;
The lane is guarded: nothing routs us but
The villany of our fears.

Gui. }
Arv. } Stand, stand, and fight!

---

15 *And make them dread it,* etc.: a hopelessly confused and obscure passage, of which no correction or explanation has been proposed which is worth consideration.

4 *carl* = churl, peasant.

Re-enter POSTHUMUS, *and seconds the* Britons: *they rescue* CYMBELINE, *and exeunt. Then re-enter* LUCIUS, *and* IACHIMO, *with* IMOGEN.

Luc. Away, boy, from the troops, and save thyself;
For friends kill friends, and the disorder 's such
As war were hoodwink'd.
Iach. 'T is their fresh supplies.
Luc. It is a day turn'd strangely: or betimes
Let 's re-inforce, or fly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Another part of the field.*

Enter POSTHUMUS *and a* British Lord.

Lord. Cam'st thou from where they made the stand?
Post. I did:
Though you, it seems, come from the fliers.
Lord. I did.
Post. No blame be to you, sir; for all was lost,
But that the heavens fought: the King himself
Of his wings destitute, the army broken,
And but the backs of Britons seen, all flying
Through a strait lane; the enemy full-hearted,
Lolling the tongue with slaught'ring, having work
More plentiful than tools to do 't, struck down
Some mortally, some slightly touch'd, some falling
Merely through fear; that the straight pass was damm'd
With dead men hurt behind, and cowards living
To die with lengthen'd shame.
Lord. Where was this lane?
Post. Close by the battle, ditch'd, and wall'd with turf;
Which gave advantage to an ancient soldier,
An honest one, I warrant; who deserv'd
So long a breeding as his white beard came to,
In doing this for 's country: athwart the lane,
He, with two striplings — lads more like to run
The country base than to commit such slaughter;
With faces fit for masks, or rather fairer
Than those for preservation cas'd, or shame, —
Made good the passage; cried to those that fled,
"Our Britain's harts die flying, not our men:
To darkness fleet souls that fly backwards. Stand;
Or we are Romans and will give you that
Like beasts which you shun beastly, and may save,
But to look back in frown: stand, stand." These three,
Three thousand confident, in act as many —
For three performers are the file when all

---

[20] *The country base:* that is, in the game of prisoner's base.
[30] *the file* = the whole company, rank and file.

The rest do nothing — with this word "Stand, stand,"
Accommodated by the place more charming,
With their own nobleness, which could have turn'd
A distaff to a lance, gilded pale looks,
Part shame, part spirit renew'd; that some, turn'd coward
But by example — O, a sin in war,
Damn'd in the first beginners! — gan to look
The way that they did, and to grin like lions
Upon the pikes o' th' hunters. Then began
A stop i' th' chaser, a retire, anon
A rout, confusion thick; forthwith they fly
Chickens, the way which they stoop'd eagles; slaves,
The strides they victors made: and now our cowards,
Like fragments in hard voyages, became
The life o' th' need: having found the back-door open
Of the unguarded hearts, heavens, how they wound!
Some slain before; some dying; some their friends
O'er-borne i' th' former wave: ten, chas'd by one,
Are now each one the slaughter-man of twenty:
Those that would die or ere resist are grown
The mortal bugs o' th' field.
Lord. This was strange chance:
A narrow lane, an old man, and two boys.
Post. Nay, do not wonder at it: you are made
Rather to wonder at the things you hear
Than to work any. Will you rhyme upon 't,
And vent it for a mockery? Here is one:
"Two boys, an old man twice a boy, a lane,
Preserved the Britons, was the Romans' bane."
Lord. Nay, be not angry, sir.
Post. 'Lack, to what end?
Who dares not stand his foe, I 'll be his friend;
For if he 'll do as he is made to do,
I know he 'll quickly fly my friendship too.
You have put me into rhyme.
Lord. Farewell; you 're angry.
Post. Still going. [*Exit Lord.*] This is a lord! O noble misery,
To be i' th' field, and ask "what news?" of me!
To-day how many would have given their honours
To have sav'd their carcases! took heel to do 't,
And yet died too! I, in mine own woe charm'd,
Could not find death where I did hear him groan,
Nor feel him where he struck: being an ugly monster,

---

44 *fragments*, of food.
51 *bugs* = objects of terror

'T is strange he hides him in fresh cups, soft beds,
Sweet words; or hath more ministers than we
That draw his knives i' th' war. Well, I will find him:
For being now a favourer to the Briton,
No more a Briton, I have resum'd again
The part I came in: fight I will no more,
But yield me to the veriest hind that shall
Once touch my shoulder. Great the slaughter is
Here made by the Roman; great the answer be
Britons must take. For me, my ransom 's death;
On either side I come to spend my breath;
Which neither here I 'll keep nor bear again,
But end it by some means for Imogen.

Enter two British Captains *and* Soldiers.

First Cap. Great Jupiter be prais'd! Lucius is taken.
'T is thought the old man and his sons were angels.
Sec. Cap. There was a fourth man, in a silly habit,
That gave the affront with them.
First Cap. So 't is reported:
But none of 'em can be found. Stand! who 's there?
Post. A Roman,
Who had not now been drooping here, if seconds
Had answer'd him.
Sec. Cap. Lay hands on him; a dog!
A leg of Rome shall not return to tell
What crows have peck'd them here. He brags his service
As if he were of note: bring him to the king.

Enter Cymbeline, Belarius, Guiderius, Arviragus, Pisanio, Soldiers, Attendants, *and* Roman Captives. *The* Captains *present* Posthumus *to* Cymbeline, *who delivers him over to a* Gaoler: *then exeunt omnes.*

Scene IV. *A British prison.*

Enter Posthumus *and two* Gaolers.

First Gaol. You shall not now be stol'n, you have locks upon you;
So graze as you find pasture.
Sec. Gaol. Ay, or a stomach. [*Exeunt Gaolers.*
Post. Most welcome, bondage! for thou art a way,
I think, to liberty: yet am I better
Than one that 's sick o' th' gout; since he had rather
Groan so in perpetuity than be cur'd
By th' sure physician, death, who is the key
To unbar these locks. My conscience, thou art fetter'd
More than my shanks and wrists: you good gods, give me

---

86 *silly* = simple, homely: as conversely we say, homespun wit.
90 *seconds* = assistants.

The penitent instrument to pick that bolt,
Then, free for ever! Is 't enough I am sorry?
So children temporal fathers do appease;
Gods are more full of mercy. Must I repent?
I cannot do it better than in gyves,
Desir'd more than constrain'd: to satisfy,
If of my freedom 't is the main part, take
No stricter render of me than my all.
I know you are more clement than vile men,
Who of their broken debtors take a third,
A sixth, a tenth, letting them thrive again
On their abatement. That 's not my desire:
For Imogen's dear life take mine; and though
'T is not so dear, yet 't is a life; you coin'd it:
'Tween man and man they weigh not every stamp;
Though light, take pieces for the figure's sake:
You rather mine, being yours: and so, great powers,
If you will take this audit, take this life,
And cancel these cold bonds. O Imogen!
I 'll speak to thee in silence. [*Sleeps.*

Solemn music. Enter, as in an apparition, SICILIUS LEONATUS, *father to* POSTHUMUS, *an old man, attired like a warrior; leading in his hand an ancient matron, his wife, and mother to* POSTHUMUS, *with music before them: then, after other music, follow the two young* LEONATI, *brothers to* POSTHUMUS, *with wounds as they died in the wars. They circle* POSTHUMUS *round, as he lies sleeping.*

Sici. No more, thou thunder-master, show
Thy spite on mortal flies:
With Mars fall out, with Juno chide,
That thy adulteries
Rates and revenges.
Hath my poor boy done aught but well,
Whose face I never saw?
I died whilst in the womb he stay'd
Attending nature's law:
Whose father then, as men report
Thou orphans' father art,
Thou shouldst have been, and shielded him
From this earth vexing smart.

Moth. Lucina lent not me her aid,
But took me in my throes;
That from me was Posthumus ript,
Came crying 'mongst his foes,
A thing of pity!

---

15 *Desir'd more than constrain'd* = worn willingly rather than unwillingly. Any obscurity found in the remainder of the sentence will disappear on reading it thus transposed. "If to satisfy [that is, satisfaction] is the main part of my freedom, take," etc.

Solemn music. This vision and the rest of the scene so far as the end of the prophecy is manifestly not S.'s work.

Sici. Great nature, like his ancestry,
Moulded the stuff so fair,
That he deserved the praise o' th' world,
As great Sicilius' heir,

First Bro. When once he was mature for man,
In Britain where was he
That could stand up his parallel;
Or fruitful object be
In eye of Imogen, that best
Could deem his dignity?

Moth. With marriage wherefore was he mock'd,
To be exil'd, and thrown
From Leonati seat, and cast
From her his dearest one,
Sweet Imogen?

Sibi. Why did you suffer Iachimo,
Slight thing of Italy,
To taint his nobler heart and brain
With needless jealousy;
And to become the geck and scorn
O' th' other's villany?

Sec. Bro. For this from stiller seats we came,
Our parents and us twain,
That striking in our country's cause
Fell bravely and were slain,
Our fealty and Tenantius' right
With honour to maintain.

First Bro. Like hardiment Posthumus hath
To Cymbeline perform'd:
Then, Jupiter, thou king of gods,
Why hast thou thus adjourn'd
The graces for his merits due,
Being all to dolours turn'd?

Sici. Thy crystal window ope; look out;
No longer exercise
Upon a valiant race thy harsh
And potent injuries.

Moth. Since, Jupiter, our son is good,
Take off his miseries.

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67 *geck*=object of ridicule.

Sici. Peep through thy marble mansion; help;
Or we poor ghosts will cry
To th' shining synod of the rest
Against thy deity.

Both Bro. Help, Jupiter; or we appeal,
And from thy justice fly.

JUPITER *descends in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an eagle: he throws a thunder bolt. The Ghosts fall on their knees.*

Jup. No more, you petty spirits of region low,
Offend our hearing; hush! How dare you ghosts
Accuse the thunderer, whose bolt, you know,
Sky-planted batters all rebelling coasts?
Poor shadows of Elysium, hence, and rest
Upon your never-withering banks of flowers:
Be not with mortal accidents opprest;
No care of yours it is; you know 't is ours.
Whom best I love I cross; to make my gift,
The more delay'd, delighted. Be content;
Your low-laid son our godhead will uplift:
His comforts thrive, his trials well are spent.
Our jovial star reign'd at his birth, and in
Our temple was he married. Rise, and fade.
He shall be lord of Lady Imogen,
And happier much by his affliction made.
This tablet lay upon his breast, wherein
Our pleasure his full fortune doth confine:
And so, away: no further with your din
Express impatience, lest you stir up mine.
Mount, eagle, to my palace crystalline. [*Ascends.*
Sici. He came in thunder; his celestial breath
Was sulphurous to smell: the holy eagle
Stoop'd, as to foot us: his ascension is
More sweet than our blest fields: his royal bird
Prunes the immortal wing and cloys his beak,
As when his god is pleas'd.
All. Thanks, Jupiter!
Sici. The marble pavement closes, he is enter'd
His radiant roof. Away! and, to be blest,
Let us with care perform his great behest. [*The Ghosts vanish.*
Post. [*Waking.*] Sleep, thou hast been a grandsire, and begot
A father to me; and thou hast created
A mother and two brothers: but, O scorn!
Gone! they went hence so soon as they were born:
And so I am awake. Poor wretches that depend

On greatness' favour dream as I have done,
Wake and find nothing. But, alas, I swerve:
Many dream not to find, neither deserve,
And yet are steep'd in favours; so am I,
That have this golden chance and know not why.
What fairies haunt this ground? A book? O rare one!
Be not, as is our fangled world, a garment
Nobler than that it covers: let thy effects
So follow, to be most unlike our courtiers,
As good as promise.

[*Reads.*] "When as a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be embraced by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock and freshly grow; then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty."

'T is still a dream, or else such stuff as madmen
Tongue and brain not; either both or nothing;
Or senseless speaking or a speaking such
As sense cannot untie. Be what it is,
The action of my life is like it, which
I 'll keep, if but for sympathy.

Re-enter Gaolers.

First Gaol. Come, sir, are you ready for death?

Post. Over-roasted rather; ready long ago.

First Gaol. Hanging is the word, sir: if you be ready for that, you are well cook'd.

Post. So, if I prove a good repast to the spectators, the dish pays the shot.

First Gaol. A heavy reckoning for you, sir. But the comfort is, you shall be called to no more payments, fear no more tavern-bills; which are often the sadness of parting, as the procuring of mirth: you come in faint for want of meat, depart reeling with too much drink; sorry that you have paid too much, and sorry that you are paid too much, purse and brain both empty; the brain the heavier for being too light, the purse too light, being drawn of heaviness: of this contradiction you shall now be quit. O, the charity of a penny cord! it sums up thousands in a trice: you have no true debtor and creditor but it; of what 's past, is, and to come, the discharge: your neck, sir, is pen, book and counters; so the acquittance follows.

Post. I am merrier to die than thou art to live.

First Gaol. Indeed, sir, he that sleeps feels not the tooth-

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[133] *A book*? = the tablet of line 109; any writing was called a book.

[138] *When as a lion's whelp.* Here "as" has no comparative force. "When as" = when that = when.

ache: but a man that were to sleep your sleep, and a hangman to help him to bed, I think he would change places with his officer; for, look you, sir, you know not which way you shall go.

Post. Yes, indeed do I, fellow.

First Gaol. Your death has eyes in 's head then; I have not seen him so pictur'd: you must either be directed by some that take upon them to know, or do take upon yourself that which I am sure you do not know, or jump the after inquiry on your own peril: and how you shall speed in your journey's end, I think you 'll never return to tell one.

Post. I tell thee, fellow, there are none want eyes to direct them the way I am going, but such as wink and will not use them.

First Gaol. What an infinite mock is this, that a man should have the best use of eyes to see the way of blindness! I am sure hanging 's the way of winking.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Knock off his manacles; bring your prisoner to the King.

Post. Thou bring'st good news; I am call'd to be made free.

First Gaol. I 'll be hang'd then.

Post. Thou shalt be then freer than a gaoler; no bolts for the dead. [*Exeunt all but the First Gaoler.*

First Gaol. Unless a man would marry a gallows and beget young gibbets, I never saw one so prone. Yet, on my conscience, there are verier knaves desire to live, for all he be a Roman: and there be some of them too that die against their wills; so should I, if I were one. I would we were all of one mind, and one mind good. O, there were desolation of gaolers and gallowses! I speak against my present profit, but my wish hath a preferment in 't. [*Exit.*

SCENE V. CYMBELINE'S *tent.*

Enter CYMBELINE, BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, PISANIO, Lords, Officers, *and* Attendants.

Cym. Stand by my side, you whom the gods have made
Preservers of my throne. Woe is my heart
That the poor soldier that so richly fought,
Whose rags sham'd gilded arms, whose naked breast
Stepp'd before targes of proof, cannot be found:
He shall be happy that can find him, if
Our grace can make him so.
Bel. I never saw
Such noble fury in so poor a thing;
Such precious deeds in one that promis'd nought
But beggary and poor looks.

Cym. No tidings of him?
Pis. He hath been search'd among the dead and living,
But no trace of him.
Cym. To my grief, I am
The heir of his reward; [*To Belarius, Guiderius, and Arviragus.*] which I will add
To you, the liver, heart and brain of Britain,
By whom I grant she lives. 'T is now the time
To ask of whence you are. Report it.
Bel. Sir,
In Cambria are we born, and gentlemen:
Further to boast were neither true nor modest,
Unless I add, we are honest.
Cym. Bow your knees.
Arise my knights o' th' battle: I create you
Companions to our person and will fit you
With dignities becoming your estates.

Enter Cornelius *and* Ladies.

There 's business in these faces. Why so sadly
Greet you our victory? you look like Romans,
And not o' th' court of Britain.
Cor. Hail, great king!
To sour your happiness, I must report
The Queen is dead.
Cym. Who worse than a physician
Would this report become? But I consider,
By medicine life may be prolong'd, yet death
Will seize the doctor too. How ended she?
Cor. With horror, madly dying, like her life,
Which, being cruel to the world, concluded
Most cruel to herself. What she confess'd
I will report, so please you: these her women
Can trip me, if I err; who with wet cheeks
Were present when she finish'd.
Cym. Prithee, say.
Cor. First, she confess'd she never lov'd you; only
Affected greatness got by you, not you:
Married your royalty, was wife to your place;
Abhorr'd your person.
Cym. She alone knew this;
And, but she spoke it dying, I would not
Believe her lips in opening it. Proceed.

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[17] *Cambria* = Wales.

[22] *With dignities becoming your estates.* This almost reverses the order and the sense in which we should use these words nowadays, that is, with estates befitting your dignities. But here "estates" = not landed property, but rank, condition in life (and see line 74); and "dignities" = that which supports and dignifies rank. Some landed estates, that is, manors, in England were known as "honours."

Cor. Your daughter, whom she bore in hand to love
With much integrity, she did confess
Was as a scorpion to her sight; whose life,
But that her flight prevented it, she had
Ta'en off by poison.
Cym. O most delicate fiend!
Who is 't can read a woman? Is there more?
Cor. More, sir, and worse. She did confess she had
For you a mortal mineral; which, being took,
Should by the minute feed on life and ling'ring
By inches waste you: in which time she purpos'd,
By watching, weeping, tendance, kissing, to
O'ercome you with her show, and in time,
When she had fitted you with her craft, to work
Her son into the adoption of the crown:
But, failing of her end by his strange absence,
Grew shameless-desperate; open'd, in despite
Of heaven and men, her purposes; repented
The evils she hatch'd were not effected; so
Despairing died.
Cym. Heard you all this, her women?
First Lady. We did, so please your highness.
Cym. Mine eyes
Were not in fault, for she was beautiful;
Mine ears, that heard her flattery; nor my heart,
That thought her like her seeming; it had been vicious
To have mistrusted her: yet, O my daughter!
That it was folly in me, thou mayst say,
And prove it in thy feeling. Heaven mend all!

Enter LUCIUS, IACHIMO, *the* Soothsayer, *and other* Roman Prisoners, *guarded;* POSTHUMUS *behind, and* IMOGEN.

Thou com'st not, Caius, now for tribute; that
The Britons have raz'd out, though with the loss
Of many a bold one; whose kinsmen have made suit
That their good souls may be appeas'd with slaughter
Of you their captives, which ourself have granted:
So think of your estate.
Luc. Consider, sir, the chance of war: the day
Was yours by accident. Had it gone with us,
We should not, when the blood was cool, have threaten'd
Our prisoners with the sword. But since the gods
Will have it thus, that nothing but our lives
May be call'd ransom, let it come: sufficeth
A Roman, with a Roman's heart can suffer:
Augustus lives to think on 't: and so much

43 *bore in hand* = made professions.

For my peculiar care. This one thing only
I will entreat; my boy, a Briton born,
Let him be ransom'd. Never master had
A page so kind, so duteous, diligent,
So tender over his occasions, true,
So feat, so nurse-like: let his virtue join
With my request, which I 'll make bold your highness
Cannot deny. He hath done no Briton harm,
Though he have serv'd a Roman. Save him, sir,
And spare no blood beside.
  Cym. I have surely seen him:
His favour is familiar to me. Boy,
Thou hast look'd thyself into my grace,
And art mine own. I know not why, wherefore,
To say Live, boy: ne'er thank thy master; live:
And ask of Cymbeline what boon thou wilt,
Fitting my bounty and thy state, I 'll give it:
Yea, though thou do demand a prisoner,
The noblest ta'en.
  Imo. I humbly thank your highness.
  Luc. I do not bid thee beg my life, good lad;
And yet I know thou wilt.
  Imo. No, no: alack,
There 's other work in hand: I see a thing
Bitter to me as death: your life, good master,
Must shuffle for itself.
  Luc. The boy disdains me,
He leaves me, scorns me: briefly die their joys
That place them on the truth of girls and boys.
Why stands he so perplex'd?
  Cym. What wouldst thou, boy?
I love thee more and more: think more and more
What 's best to ask. Know'st him thou look'st on? speak,
Wilt have him live? Is he thy kin? thy friend?
  Imo. He is a Roman; no more kin to me
Than I to your highness; who, being born your vassal,
Am something nearer.
  Cym. Wherefore ey'st him so?
  Imo. I 'll tell you, sir, in private, if you please
To give me hearing.
  Cym. Ay, with all my heart,
And lend my best attention. What 's thy name?
  Imo. Fidele, sir.
  Cym. Thou 'rt my good youth, my page;
I 'll be thy master: walk with me; speak freely.
[*Cymbeline and Imogen talk apart.*

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88 *feat* = delicately dexterous.

Bel. Is not this boy reviv'd from death?
Arv. One sand another
Not more resembles that sweet rosy lad
Who died, and was Fidele. What think you?
Gui. The same dead thing alive.
Bel. Peace, peace! see further; he eyes us not; forbear;
Creatures may be alike: were 't he, I am sure
He would have spoke to us.
Gui. But we saw him dead.
Bel. Be silent; let 's see further.
Pis. [*Aside.*] It is my mistress:
Since she is living, let the time run on
To good or bad. [*Cymbeline and Imogen come forward.*
Cym. Come, stand thou by our side;
Make thy demand aloud. [*To Iachimo.*] Sir, step you forth;
Give answer to this boy, and do it freely;
Or, by our greatness and the grace of it,
Which is our honour, bitter torture shall
Winnow the truth from falsehood. On, speak to him.
Imo. My boon is, that this gentleman may render
Of whom he had this ring.
Post. [*Aside.*] What 's that to him?
Cym. That diamond upon your finger, say
How came it yours?
Iach. Thou 'lt torture me to leave unspoken that
Which, to be spoke, would torture thee.
Cym. How! me?
Iach. I am glad to be constrain'd to utter that
Which torments me to conceal. By villany
I got this ring: 't was Leonatus' jewel;
Whom thou didst banish; and — which more may grieve thee,
As it doth me — a nobler sir ne'er liv'd
'Twixt sky and ground. Wilt thou hear more, my lord?
Cym. All that belongs to this.
Iach. That paragon, thy daughter, —
For whom my heart drops blood, and my false spirits
Quail to remember — Give me leave; I faint.
Cym. My daughter! what of her? Renew thy strength:
I had rather thou shouldst live while nature will
Than die ere I hear more: strive, man, and speak.
Iach. Upon a time, — unhappy was the clock
That struck the hour! — it was in Rome, — accurs'd
The mansion where! — 't was at a feast, — O, would
Our viands had been poison'd, or at least
Those which I heav'd to head! — the good Posthumus —
What should I say? he was too good to be

Where ill men were; and was the best of all
Amongst the rar'st of good ones, — sitting sadly,
Hearing us praise our loves of Italy
For beauty that made barren the swell'd boast
Of him that best could speak, for feature, laming
The shrine of Venus, or straight-pight Minerva,
Postures beyond brief nature, for condition,
A shop of all the qualities that man
Loves woman for, besides that hook of wiving,
Fairness which strikes the eye —
Cym. I stand on fire:
Come to the matter.
Iach. All too soon I shall,
Unless thou wouldst grieve quickly. This Posthumus,
Most like a noble lord in love and one
That had a royal lover, took his hint;
And, not dispraising whom we prais'd, — therein
He was as calm as virtue — he began
His mistress' picture; which by his tongue being made,
And then a mind put in 't, either our brags
Were crack'd of kitchen-trulls, or his description
Prov'd us unspeaking sots.
Cym. Nay, nay, to the purpose.
Iach. Your daughter's chastity — there it begins.
He spake of her, as Dian had hot dreams,
And she alone were cold: whereat I, wretch,
Made scruple of his praise; and wager'd with him
Pieces of gold 'gainst this which then he wore
Upon his honour'd finger, to attain
In suit the place of 's bed and win this ring
By hers and mine adultery. He, true knight,
No lesser of her honour confident
Than I did truly find her, stakes this ring;
And would so, had it been a carbuncle
Of Phœbus' wheel, and might so safely, had it
Been all the worth of 's car. Away to Britain
Post I in this design. Well may you, sir,
Remember me at court, where I was taught
Of your chaste daughter the wide difference
'Twixt amorous and villanous. Being thus quench'd
Of hope, not longing, mine Italian brain
'Gan in your duller Britain operate
Most vilely; for my vantage, excellent:
And, to be brief, my practice so prevail'd,

[164] *straight-pight* = straight-pitched, straight-built.
[166] *A shop* = storehouse.
[177] *crack'd* = boasted.

That I return'd with simular proof enough
To make the noble Leonatus mad,
By wounding his belief in her renown
With tokens thus, and thus; averring notes
Of chamber-hanging, pictures, this her bracelet, —
O cunning, how I got it! — nay, some marks
Of secret on her person, that he could not
But think her bond of chastity quite crack'd,
I having ta'en the forfeit. Whereupon —
Methinks, I see him now —
Post. [*Advancing.*] Ay, so thou dost,
Italian fiend! Ay me, most credulous fool,
Egregious murderer, thief, any thing
That 's due to all the villains past, in being,
To come! O, give me cord, or knife, or poison,
Some upright justicer! Thou, King, send out
For torturers ingenious: it is I
That all the abhorred things o' the earth amend
By being worse than they. I am Posthumus,
That kill'd thy daughter: — villain-like, I lie —
That caused a lesser villain than myself,
A sacrilegious thief, to do 't. The temple
Of virtue was she; yea, and she herself.
Spit, and throw stones, cast mire upon me, set
The dogs o' th' street to bay me: every villain
Be call'd Posthumus Leonatus; and
Be villany less than 't was! O Imogen!
My queen, my life, my wife! O Imogen,
Imogen, Imogen!
Imo. Peace, my lord; hear, hear —
Post. Shall 's have a play of this? Thou scornful page
There lie thy part. [*Striking her; she falls.*
Pis. O, gentlemen, help!
Mine and your mistress! O, my Lord Posthumus!
You ne'er kill'd Imogen till now. Help, help!
Mine honour'd lady!
Cym. Does the world go round?
Post. How come these staggers on me?
Pis. Wake, my mistress!
Cym. If this be so, the gods do mean to strike me
To death with mortal joy.
Pis. How fares my mistress?
Imo. O, get thee from my sight;
Thou gav'st me poison: dangerous fellow, hence!
Breathe not where princes are.
Cym. The tune of Imogen!

Pis. Lady,
The gods throw stones of sulphur on me, if
That box I gave you was not thought by me
A precious thing: I had it from the Queen.
Cym. New matter still?
Imo. It poison'd me.
Cor. O gods!
I left out one thing which the Queen confess'd,
Which must approve thee honest: "If Pisanio
Have," said she, "given his mistress that confection
Which I gave him for cordial, she is serv'd
As I would serve a rat."
Cym. What 's this, Cornelius?
Cor. The Queen, sir, very oft importun'd me
To temper poisons for her, still pretending
The satisfaction of her knowledge only
In killing creatures vile, as cats and dogs,
Of no esteem: I, dreading that her purpose
Was of more danger, did compound for her
A certain stuff, which, being ta'en, would cease
The present power of life, but in short time
All offices of nature should again
Do their due functions. Have you ta'en of it?
Imo. Most like I did, for I was dead.
Bel. My boys,
There was our error.
Gui. This is, sure, Fidele.
Imo. Why did you throw your wedded lady from you?
Think that you are upon a rock; and now
Throw me again. [*Embracing him.*
Post. Hang there like fruit, my soul,
Till the tree die!
Cym. How now, my flesh, my child!
What, mak'st thou me a dullard in this act?
Wilt thou not speak to me?
Imo. [*Kneeling.*] Your blessing, sir.
Bel. [*To Guiderius and Arviragus.*] Though you did love this youth, I blame ye not;
You had a motive for 't.
Cym. My tears that fall
Prove holy water on thee! Imogen,
Thy mother 's dead.
Imo. I am sorry for 't, my lord.
Cym. O, she was naught; and long of her it was

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249 *importun'd:* accented on the second syllable.

262 *Think that you are upon a rock:* a passage the obscurity of which has hitherto baffled all attempts at explanation and correction.

268 *a motive* = an intuitive cause.

That we meet here so strangely: but her son
Is gone, we know not how nor where.
Pis. My lord,
Now fear is from me, I 'll speak troth. Lord Cloten,
Upon my lady's missing, came to me
With his sword drawn; foam'd at the mouth, and swore,
If I discover'd not which way she was gone,
It was my instant death. By accident,
I had a feigned letter of my master's
Then in my pocket; which directed him
To seek her on the mountains near to Milford;
Where, in a frenzy, in my master's garments,
Which he enforc'd from me, away he posts
With unchaste purpose and with oath to violate
My lady's honour: what became of him
I further know not.
Gui. Let me end the story:
I slew him there.
Cym. Marry, the gods forfend!
I would not thy good deeds should from my lips
Pluck a hard sentence: prithee, valiant youth,
Deny 't again.
Gui. I have spoke it, and I did it.
Cym. He was a prince.
Gui. A most incivil one: the wrongs he did me
Were nothing prince-like; for he did provoke me
With language that would make me spurn the sea,
If it could so roar to me. I cut off 's head;
And am right glad he is not standing here
To tell this tale of mine.
Cym. I am sorry for thee:
By thine own tongue thou art condemn'd, and must
Endure our law: thou 'rt dead.
Imo. That headless man
I thought had been my lord.
Cym. Bind the offender,
And take him from our presence.
Bel. Stay, sir king:
This man is better than the man he slew,
As well descended as thyself; and hath
More of thee merited than a band of Clotens
Had ever scarre for. [*To the Guard.*] Let his arms alone;
They were not born for bondage.

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305 *scarre:* thus the folio. The word has been taken by all editors to be *scar.* But Cloten had no scar; he merited nothing of Cymbeline. The word is possibly the same that occurs in *All 's Well that Ends Well*, Act I. Sc. 2, line 38.

Cym. Why, old soldier,
Wilt thou undo the worth thou art unpaid for,
By tasting of our wrath? How of descent
As good as we?
Arv. In that he spake too far.
Cym. And thou shalt die for 't.
Bel. We will die all three:
But I will prove that two on 's are as good
As I have given out him. My sons, I must,
For mine own part, unfold a dangerous speech,
Though, haply, well for you.
Arv. Your danger 's ours.
Gui. And our good his.
Bel. Have at it then, by leave.
Thou hadst, great king, a subject who
Was call'd Belarius.
Cym. What of him? he is
A banish'd traitor.
Bel. He it is that hath
Assum'd this age; indeed a banish'd man;
I know not how a traitor.
Cym. Take him hence:
The whole world shall not save him.
Bel. Not too hot:
First pay me for the nursing of thy sons;
And let it be confiscate all, so soon
As I have received it.
Cym. Nursing of my sons!
Bel. I am too blunt and saucy: here 's my knee:
Ere I arise, I will prefer my sons;
Then spare not the old father. Mighty sir,
These two young gentlemen, that call me father
And think they are my sons, are none of mine;
They are the issue of your loins, my liege,
And blood of your begetting.
Cym. How! my issue!
Bel. So sure as you your father's. I, old Morgan,
Am that Belarius whom you sometime banish'd:
Your pleasure was my mere offence, my punishment
Itself, and all my treason; that I suffer'd
Was all the harm I did. These gentle princes —
For such and so they are — these twenty years
Have I train'd up: those arts they have as I
Could put into them; my breeding was, sir, as
Your highness knows. Their nurse, Euriphile,
Whom for the theft I wedded, stole these children

Upon my banishment: I mov'd her to 't,
Having received the punishment before,
For that which I did then: beaten for loyalty
Excited me to treason: their dear loss,
The more of you 't was felt, the more it shap'd
Unto my end of stealing them. But, gracious sir,
Here are your sons again; and I must lose
Two of the sweet'st companions in the world.
The benediction of these covering heavens
Fall on their heads like dew! for they are worthy
To inlay heaven with stars.
  Cym. Thou weep'st, and speak'st.
The service that you three have done is more
Unlike than this thou tell'st. I lost my children:
If these be they, I know not how to wish
A pair of worthier sons.
  Bel. Be pleas'd awhile.
This gentleman, whom I call Polydore,
Most worthy prince, as yours, is true Guiderius:
This gentleman, my Cadwal, Arviragus,
Your younger princely son; he, sir, was lapp'd
In a most curious mantle, wrought by the hand
Of his queen mother, which for more probation
I can with ease produce.
  Cym. Guiderius had
Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star;
It was a mark of wonder.
  Bel. This is he;
Who hath upon him still that natural stamp:
It was wise nature's end in the donation,
To be his evidence now.
  Cym. O, what, am I
A mother to the birth of three? Ne'er mother
Rejoiced deliverance more. Blest pray you be,
That, after this strange starting from your orbs,
You may reign in them now! O Imogen,
Thou hast lost by this a kingdom.
  Imo. No, my lord;
I have got two worlds by 't. O my gentle brothers,
Have we thus met? O, never say hereafter
But I am truest speaker: you call'd me brother,
When I was but your sister; I you brothers,
When ye were so indeed.
  Cym. Did you e'er meet?
  Arv. Ay, my good lord.
  Gui. And at first meeting lov'd;
Continued so, until we thought he died.

Cor. By the Queen's dram she swallow'd.
Cym. O rare instinct!
When shall I hear all through? This fierce abridgement
Hath to it circumstantial branches, which
Distinction should be rich in. Where? how liv'd you?
And when came you to serve our Roman captive?
How parted with your brothers? how first met them?
Why fled you from the court? and whither? These
And your three motives to the battle, with
I know not how much more, should be demanded;
And all the other by-dependencies,
From chance to chance: but nor the time nor place
Will serve our long inter'gatories. See,
Posthumus anchors upon Imogen,
And she, like harmless lightning, throws her eye
On him, her brothers, me, her master, hitting
Each object with a joy: the counterchange
Is severally in all. Let's quit this ground,
And smoke the temple with our sacrifices.
[*To Belarius.*] Thou art my brother; so we'll hold thee ever.
Imo. You are my father too, and did relieve me,
To see this gracious season.
Cym. All o'erjoy'd,
Save these in bonds: let them be joyful too,
For they shall taste our comfort.
Imo. My good master,
I will yet do you service.
Luc. Happy be you!
Cym. The forlorn soldier, that so nobly fought,
He would have well becom'd this place, and grac'd
The thankings of a king.
Post. I am, sir,
The soldier that did company these three
In poor beseeming; 't was a fitment for
The purpose I then follow'd. That I was he,
Speak, Iachimo: I had you down and might
Have made you finish.
Iach. [*Kneeling.*] I am down again:
But now my heavy conscience sinks my knee,
As then your force did. Take that life, beseech you,
Which I so often owe: but your ring first;
And here the bracelet of the truest princess
That ever swore her faith.

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392 *inter'gatories* = interrogatories: a common form of the word in S.'s time: accented on the second syllable.

Post. Kneel not to me:
The power that I have on you is to spare you;
The malice towards you to forgive you: live,
And deal with others better.
Cym. Nobly doom'd!
We 'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law;
Pardon 's the word to all.
Arv. You holp us, sir,
As you did mean indeed to be our brother;
Joy'd are we that you are.
Post. Your servant, princes. Good my lord of Rome,
Call forth your soothsayer: as I slept, methought
Great Jupiter, upon his eagle back'd,
Appear'd to me, with other spritely shows
Of mine own kindred: when I wak'd, I found
This label on my bosom; whose containing
Is so from sense in hardness, that I can
Make no collection of it: let him show
His skill in the construction.
Luc. Philarmonus!
Sooth. Here, my good lord.
Luc. Read, and declare the meaning.

Sooth. [*Reads.*] "When as a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be embraced by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow; then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty."

Thou, Leonatus, art the lion's whelp;
The fit and apt construction of thy name,
Being *leo-natus*, doth import so much.
[*To Cymbeline.*] The piece of tender air, thy virtuous daughter,
Which we call *mollis aer*; and *mollis aer*
We term it *mulier*: which *mulier* I divine
Is this most constant wife; who, even now,
Answering the letter of the oracle,
Unknown to you, unsought, were clipp'd about
With this most tender air.
Cym. This hath some seeming.
Sooth. The lofty cedar, royal Cymbeline,
Personates thee: and thy lopp'd branches point
Thy two sons forth; who, by Belarius stol'n,
For many years thought dead, are now reviv'd,
To the majestic cedar join'd, whose issue
Promises Britain peace and plenty.

445 *mollis aer* = soft air; *mulier* = woman. (Lat.) This derivation of *mulier* was a fanciful philological folly of S.'s time, — not at all peculiar to him.

Cym. Well;
My peace we will begin. And, Caius Lucius,
Although the victor, we submit to Cæsar,
And to the Roman empire; promising
To pay our wonted tribute, from the which
We were dissuaded by our wicked queen;
Whom heavens, in justice, both on her and hers,
Have laid most heavy hand.
Sooth. The fingers of the powers above do tune
The harmony of this peace. The vision
Which I made known to Lucius, ere the stroke
Of this yet scarce-cold battle, at this instant
Is full accomplish'd; for the Roman eagle,
From south to west on wing soaring aloft,
Lessen'd herself, and in the beams o' the sun
So vanish'd: which foreshow'd our princely eagle,
The imperial Cæsar, should again unite
His favour with the radiant Cymbeline,
Which shines here in the west.
Cym. Laud we the gods;
And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
From our bless'd altars. Publish we this peace
To all our subjects. Set we forward: let
A Roman and a British ensign wave
Friendly together: so through Lud's-town march:
And in the temple of great Jupiter
Our peace we'll ratify; seal it with feasts.
Set on there! Never was a war did cease,
Ere bloody hands were wash'd, with such a peace. [*Exeunt.*

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462 *Whom heavens*, for "on whom," etc.

PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS drama was not included by Shakespeare's player-editors in the folio of 1623; but two editions of it were published as his during his life and at the height of his popularity, — the quartos of 1609 and 1611. It is not known that he, or any one on his part, ever denied the authorship thus claimed for *Pericles;* and this is all the external evidence that we have on the subject. The internal evidence, however, strongly supports the testimony of the quarto title-pages. A great part of the play fathers itself. Quite two thirds of it could have been written by no other hand than Shakespeare's. But the style of these parts is that of his latest period, and it is impossible to accept *Pericles* as an original work of Shakespeare's, in plan and characterization, at that time. It is too clumsy, too feeble, too puerile, too monstrous, too revolting, and, moreover, too old-fashioned. We are much in the dark in regard to it; but all the evidence leads to the conclusion that it was originally the work of a very inferior playwright of the early Elizabethan period ; that it became the property of Shakespeare's company; and that he rewrote most of it entirely, and "touched it up" here and there from beginning to end. It is founded upon a very old Latin romance, called *Apollonius Tyrius*, which, after having been translated into Anglo-Saxon, was retold by Gower, in the eighth book of his *Confessio Amantis.* Upon Gower's version, the original author of *Pericles* founded his play; and he, or perhaps Shakespeare, also consulted an English translation of *Apollonius*, published by Lawrence Twine in 1576, under the title of *The Patterne of Painfull Adventures.* Both the story and the play seem to have been popular, in spite of, perhaps by reason of, the monstrous and horrible incidents upon which their common interest depends ; and two editions of the play, besides those already mentioned, were published in 1619 and 1630. The text of all of these is corrupt and confused almost beyond description. By much correction of manifest typographical error, and by conjectural emendation at the hands of many editors and critics, it has been brought to the condition in which it is now presented ; but not a few passages are still in incomprehensible confusion, and will surely remain so. They are past cure. As a whole, the play is of little value ; but in certain passages it is distinguished by the manifestation of Shakespeare's highest power. *Pericles* was produced in its present form in 1608 or 1609.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ANTIOCHUS, *king of Antioch.*
PERICLES, *prince of Tyre.*
HELICANUS, } *two lords of Tyre.*
ESCANES, }
SIMONIDES, *king of Pentapolis.*
CLEON, *governor of Tarsus.*
LYSIMACHUS, *governor of Mytilene.*
CERIMON, *a lord of Ephesus.*
THALIARD, *a lord of Antioch.*
PHILEMON, *servant to Cerimon.*
LEONINE, *servant to Dionyza.*
Marshal.
A Pandar.
BOULT, *his servant.*

The Daughter of Antiochus.
DIONYZA, *wife to Cleon.*
THAISA, *daughter to Simonides.*
MARINA, *daughter to Pericles and Thaisa.*
LYCHORIDA, *nurse to Marina.*
A Bawd.

Lords, Knights, Gentlemen, Sailors, Pirates, Fishermen, and Messengers.

DIANA.
GOWER, *as Chorus.*

SCENE: Dispersedly in various countries.

⁂ To prevent a supposition of neglect, I mention here the opinion of some critics that *Pericles* is the work of three writers, two besides Shakespeare. Quite possibly; but whether such stuff as the non-Shakespearean scenes was written by two men or twenty, what matter? as the point does not (unlike the cases of *Henry VI.* and *The Taming of the Shrew*) affect the question of Shakespeare's relation to the play. Another conjecture, that Shakespeare wrote from the beginning of Act III. and left the body of the play thus without head and shoulders, and that it was afterwards completed and made fit for the stage by other hands, seems to me quite unacceptable, and at variance with what we know of Shakespeare's way of working. To please the public and fill his theatre he would write anything, accept anything, alter anything, tolerate anything. But we may be sure that in his strongest period, or at any period, he did not write imperfect plays and leave them "lying around loose," to be spliced and patched by others. His work was for immediate use. Moreover Act III. and the following parts of the play contain evidence that the choruses, and the previous acts in some form, had been written before them.—Scenes 2 and 6, Act IV., rejected hitherto by all editors and critics as not Shakespeare's, are surely by the same hand that wrote the Boar's Head scene in the Second Part of *Henry IV.*, not to mention others like in spirit and in phrase.

PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE.

ACT I.

Enter GOWER.

Before the palace of Antioch. Heads and skulls of men over the gate.

To sing a song that old was sung,
From ashes ancient Gower is come;
Assuming man's infirmities,
To glad your ear, and please your eyes.
It hath been sung at festivals,
On ember-eves and holy-ales;
And lords and ladies in their lives
Have read it for restoratives:
The purchase is to make men glorious;
Et bonum quo antiquius, eo melius.
If you, born in these latter times,
When wit 's more ripe, accept my rhymes,
And that to hear an old man sing
May to your wishes pleasure bring,
I life would wish, and that I might
Waste it for you, like taper-light.
This Antioch, then, Antiochus the Great
Built up, this city, for his chiefest seat;
The fairest in all Syria,
I tell you what mine authors say:
This king unto him took a fere,
Who died and left a female heir,
So buxom, blithe, and full of face,
As heaven had lent her all his grace;
With whom the father liking took,
And her to incest did provoke:
Bad child; worse father! to entice his own
To evil should be done by none:
But custom what they did begin

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6 *ember-eves:* ember = a quarterly fast: *holy-ales* = minor religious festivals.
9 *purchase* = what is obtained by it.
10 *Et bonum*, etc. = (freely) And the older the better. (Lat.)
21 *fere* = mate, lover, concubine, of either sex, married or unmarried.

Was with long use account no sin.
The beauty of this sinful dame
Made many princes thither frame,
To seek her as a bed-fellow,
In marriage-pleasures play-fellow:
Which to prevent he made a law,
To keep her still, and men in awe,
That whoso ask'd her for his wife,
His riddle told not, lost his life:
So for her many a wight did die.
As yon grim looks do testify.
What now ensues, to th' judgement of your eye
I give, my cause who best can justify. [*Exit.*

Scene I. *Antioch. A room in the palace.*

Enter Antiochus, Prince Pericles, *and followers.*

Ant. Young Prince of Tyre, you have at large receiv'd
The danger of the task you undertake.
Per. I have, Antiochus, and, with a soul
Embolden'd with the glory of her praise,
Think death no hazard in this enterprise.
Ant. Bring in our daughter, clothed like a bride,
For the embracements even of Jove himself;
At whose conception, till Lucina reign'd,
Nature this dowry gave, to glad her presence,
The senate-house of planets all did sit,
To knit in her their best perfections.

Music. Enter the Daughter of Antiochus.

Per. See where she comes, apparell'd like the spring,
Graces her subjects, and her thoughts the king
Of every virtue gives renown to men!
Her face the book of praises, where is read
Nothing but curious pleasures, as from thence
Sorrow were ever raz'd, and testy wrath
Could never be her mild companion.
You gods that made me man, and sway in love,
That have inflam'd desire in my breast
To taste the fruit of yon celestial tree,
Or die in the adventure, be my helps,
As I am son and servant to your will,
To compass such a boundless happiness!
Ant. Prince Pericles, —

---

frame = frame their way, take their course.
till Lucina reign'd = until she was born. Lucina was the goddess who was supposed to preside at childbirth.

Per. That would be son to great Antiochus.
Ant. Before thee stands this fair Hesperides,
With golden fruit, but dangerous to be touch'd;
For death-like dragons here affright thee hard:
Her face, like heaven, enticeth thee to view
Her countless glory, which desert must gain;
And which, without desert, because thine eye
Presumes to reach, all thy whole heap must die.
Yon sometimes famous princes, like thyself,
Drawn by report, adventurous by desire,
Tell thee, with speechless tongues and semblance pale,
That without covering, save yon field of stars,
Here they stand martyrs, slain in Cupid's wars;
And with dead cheeks advise thee to desist
For going on death's net, whom none resist.
Per. Antiochus, I thank thee, who hath taught
My frail mortality to know itself,
And by those fearful objects to prepare
This body, like to them, to what I must;
For death remember'd should be like a mirror,
Who tells us life 's but breath, to trust it error.
I 'll make my will then, and, as sick men do
Who know the world, see heaven, but, feeling woe,
Gripe not at earthly joys as erst they did;
So I bequeath a happy peace to you
And all good men, as every prince should do;
My riches to the earth from whence they came;
But my unspotted fire of love to you. *[To the daughter of Antiochus.*
Thus ready for the way of life or death,
I wait the sharpest blow, Antiochus.
Ant. Scorning advice, read the conclusion, then:
Which read and not expounded, 't is decreed,
As these before thee thou thyself shalt bleed.
Daugh. Of all 'say'd yet, mayst thou prove prosperous!
Of all 'say'd yet, I wish thee happiness!
Per. Like a bold champion, I assume the lists,
Nor ask advice of any other thought
But faithfulness and courage.

He reads the riddle.

I am no viper, yet I feed
On mother's flesh which did me breed.
I sought a husband, in which labour
I found that kindness in a father:
He 's father, son, and husband mild;

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[27] *Hesperides.* The Hesperides were not the garden, but the keepers of the garden, in which was the golden fruit.

[34] *Yon sometimes famous princes:* the men whose heads are over the gate.

[59] *'say'd* = assayed; that is, who have assayed or tried.

I mother, wife, and yet his child.
How they may be, and yet in two,
As you will live, resolve it you.

Sharp physic is the last: but, O you powers
That give heaven countless eyes to view men's acts,
Why cloud they not their sights perpetually,
If this be true, which makes me pale to read it?
Fair glass of light, I lov'd you, and could still,
[*Takes the hand of the Princess.*
Were not this glorious casket stor'd with ill:
But I must tell you, now my thoughts revolt;
For he 's no man on whom perfections wait
That, knowing sin within, will touch the gate.
You are a fair viol, and your sense the strings;
Who, finger'd to make man his lawful music,
Would draw heaven down, and all the gods, to hearken;
But being play'd upon before your time,
Hell only danceth at so harsh a chime.
Good sooth, I care not for you.
Ant. Prince Pericles, touch not, upon thy life,
For that 's an article within our law,
As dangerous as the rest. Your time 's expir'd:
Either expound now, or receive your sentence.
Per. Great king,
Few love to hear the sins they love to act;
'T would braid yourself too near for me to tell it.
Who has a book of all that monarchs do,
He 's more secure to keep it shut than shown:
For vice repeated is like the wandering wind,
Blows dust in others' eyes, to spread itself;
And yet the end of all is bought thus dear,
The breath is gone, and the sore eyes see clear
To stop the air would hurt them. The blind mole casts
Copp'd hills towards heaven, to tell the earth is throng'd
By man's oppression; and the poor worm doth die for 't.
Kings are earth's gods; in vice their law 's their will;
And if Jove stray, who dare say Jove doth ill?
It is enough you know; and it is fit,
What being more known grows worse, to smother it.
All love the womb that their first being bred,
Then give my tongue like leave to love my head.
Ant. [*Aside.*] Heaven, that I had thy head! he has found the meaning:
But I will gloze with him.—Young Prince of Tyre,

101 *Copp'd* = headed, with high, rounded tops.
110 *gloze* = speak deceitfully.

Though by the tenour of our strict edict,
Your exposition misinterpreting,
We might proceed to cancel of your days;
Yet hope, succeeding from so fair a tree
As your fair self, doth tune us otherwise:
Forty days longer we do respite you;
If by which time our secret be undone,
This mercy shows we 'll joy in such a son:
And until then your entertain shall be
As doth befit our honour and your worth. [*Exeunt all but Pericles.*

Per. How courtesy would seem to cover sin,
When what is done is like an hypocrite,
The which is good in nothing but in sight!
If it be true that I interpret false,
Then were it certain you were not so bad
As with foul incest to abuse your soul;
Where now you 're both a father and a son,
By your untimely claspings with your child,
Which pleasure fits an husband, not a father;
And she an eater of her mother's flesh,
By the defiling of her parent's bed;
And both like serpents are, who though they feed
On sweetest flowers, yet they poison breed.
Antioch, farewell! for wisdom sees, those men
Blush not in actions blacker than the night,
Will shun no course to keep them from the light.
One sin, I know, another doth provoke;
Murder 's as near to lust as flame to smoke:
Poison and treason are the hands of sin,
Ay, and the targets, to put off the shame:
Then, lest my life be cropp'd to keep you clear,
By flight I 'll shun the danger which I fear. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Antiochus.

Ant. He hath found the meaning, for which we mean
To have his head.
He must not live to trumpet forth my infamy,
Nor tell the world Antiochus doth sin
In such a loathed manner;
And therefore instantly this prince must die:
For by his fall my honour must keep high.
Who attends us there?

Enter Thaliard

Thal. Doth your highness call?

Ant. Thaliard,
You are of our chamber, and our mind partakes
Her private actions to your secrecy;

And for your faithfulness we will advance you.
Thaliard, behold, here 's poison, and here 's gold;
We hate the Prince of Tyre, and thou must kill him:
It fits thee not to ask the reason why,
Because we bid it. Say, is it done?
Thal. My lord,
'T is done.
Ant. Enough.

Enter a Messenger.

Let your breath cool yourself, telling your haste.
Mes. My lord, Prince Pericles is fled. [*Exi*
Ant. As thou
Wilt live, fly after: and like an arrow shot
From a well-experienced archer hits the mark
His eye doth level at, so thou ne'er return
Unless thou say "Prince Pericles is dead."
Thal. My lord,
If I can get him within my pistol's length,
I 'll make him sure enough: so, farewell to your highness.
Ant. Thaliard, adieu! [*Exit Thal.*] Till Pericles be dead,
My heart can lend no succour to my head. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Tyre. A room in the palace.*

Enter PERICLES.

Per. [*To Lords without.*] Let none disturb us. — Why should this change of thoughts,
The sad companion, dull-eyed melancholy,
Be my so us'd a guest as not an hour,
In the day's glorious walk, or peaceful night,
The tomb where grief should sleep, can breed me quiet?
Here pleasures court mine eyes, and mine eyes shun them;
And danger, which I fear'd, is at Antioch,
Whose aim seems far too short to hit me here:
Yet neither pleasure's art can joy my spirits,
Nor yet the other's distance comfort me.
Then it is thus: the passions of the mind,
That have their first conception by mis-dread,
Have after-nourishment and life by care;
And what was first but fear what might be done,
Grows elder now and cares it be not done.
And so with me: the great Antiochus,
'Gainst whom I am too little to contend,
Since he 's so great can make his will his act,

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[168] *pistol.* It may be worth while to say that this is an extravagance of anachronism which is hardly to be received as S.'s, indifferent as he was on such points.

Will think me speaking, though I swear to silence;
Nor boots it me to say I honour him,
If he suspect I may dishonour him:
And what may make him blush in being known,
He 'll stop the course by which it might be known;
With hostile forces he 'll o'erspread the land,
And with the ostent of war will look so huge,
Amazement shall drive courage from the state;
Our men be vanquish'd ere they do resist,
And subjects punish'd that ne'er thought offence:
Which care of them, not pity of myself,
Who am no more but as the tops of trees,
Which fence the roots they grow by and defend them,
Makes both my body pine and soul to languish,
And punish that before that he would punish.

Enter HELICANUS, *with other* LORDS.

First Lord. Joy and all comfort in your sacred breast!
Sec. Lord. And keep your mind, till you return to us,
Peaceful and comfortable!
Hel. Peace, peace, and give experience tongue.
They do abuse the King that flatter him:
For flattery is the bellows blows up sin;
The thing the which is flatter'd, but a spark,
To which that blast gives heat and stronger glowing;
Whereas reproof, obedient and in order,
Fits kings, as they are men, for they may err.
When Signior Sooth here does proclaim a peace,
He flatters you, makes war upon your life.
Prince, pardon me, or strike me, if you please;
I cannot be much lower than my knees.
Per. All leave us else; but let your cares o'erlook
What shipping and what lading 's in our haven,
And then return to us. [*Exeunt Lords.*] Helicanus, thou
Hast mov'd us: what seest thou in our looks?
Hel. An angry brow, dread lord.
Per. If there be such a dart in princes' frowns,
How durst thy tongue move anger to our face?
Hel. How dare the plants look up to heaven, from whence
They have their nourishment?
Per. Thou know'st I have power
To take thy life from thee.
Hel. [*Kneeling.*] I have ground the axe myself;
Do you but strike the blow.
Per. Rise, prithee, rise.
Sit down: thou art no flatterer:
I thank thee for it; and heaven forbid

That kings should let their ears hear their faults hid!
Fit counsellor and servant for a prince,
Who by thy wisdom mak'st a prince thy servant,
What wouldst thou have me do?
Hel. To bear with patience
Such griefs as you yourself do lay upon yourself.
Per. Thou speak'st like a physician, Helicanus,
That minister'st a potion unto me
That thou wouldst tremble to receive thyself.
Attend me, then: I went to Antioch,
Where, as thou know'st, against the face of death,
I sought the purchase of a glorious beauty,
From whence an issue I might propagate,

. . . .

Are arms to princes and bring joys to subjects.
Her face was to mine eye beyond all wonder;
The rest — hark in thine ear — as black as incest:
Which by my knowledge found, the sinful father
Seem'd not to strike, but smooth: but thou know'st this,
'T is time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss.
Which fear so grew in me, I hither fled,
Under the covering of a careful night,
Who seem'd my good protector; and, being here,
Bethought me what was past, what might succeed.
I knew him tyrannous; and tyrants' fears
Decrease not, but grow faster than the years:
And should he doubt it, as no doubt he doth,
That I should open to the listening air
How many worthy princes' blood were shed,
To keep his bed of blackness unlaid ope,
To lop that doubt, he 'll fill this land with arms,
And make pretence of wrong that I have done him;
When all for mine (if I may call) offence
Must feel war's blow, who spares not innocence:
Which love to all, of which thyself art one,
Who now reprov'st me for it, —
Hel. Alas, sir!
Per. Drew sleep out of mine eyes, blood from my cheeks,
Musings into my mind, with thousand doubts
How I might stop this tempest ere it came;
And finding little comfort to relieve them,
I thought it princely charity to grieve them.
Hel. Well, my lord, since you have given me leave to speak,
Freely will I speak. Antiochus you fear;

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74 *Are arms*, etc. Between lines 73 and 74 something has been lost; probably two or three lines at least.

And justly too, I think, you fear the tyrant,
Who either by public war or private treason
Will take away your life.
Therefore, my lord, go travel for a while,
Till that his rage and anger be forgot,
Or till the Destinies do cut his thread of life.
Your rule direct to any; if to me,
Day serves not light more faithful than I 'll be.
Per. I do not doubt thy faith;
But should he wrong my liberties in my absence?
Hel. We 'll mingle our bloods together in the earth,
From whence we had our being and our birth.
Per. Tyre, I now look from thee then, and to Tarsus
Intend my travel, where I 'll hear from thee;
And by whose letters I 'll dispose myself.
The care I had and have of subjects' good
On thee I lay, whose wisdom's strength can bear it.
I 'll take thy word for faith, not ask thine oath:
Who shuns not to break one will sure crack both:
But in our orbs we 'll live so round and safe,
That time of both this truth shall ne'er convince,
Thou show'dst a subject's shine, I a true prince. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *Tyre. An antechamber in the palace.*

Enter Thaliard.

Thal. So, this is Tyre, and this the court. Here must I kill King Pericles; and if I do it not, I am sure to be hang'd at home: 't is dangerous. Well, I perceive he was a wise fellow, and had good discretion, that, being bid to ask what he would of the King, desired he might know none of his secrets: now do I see he had some reason for 't; for if a king bid a man be a villain, he 's bound by the indenture of his oath to be one. Hush! here come the lords of Tyre.

Enter Helicanus *and* Escanes, *with other* Lords *of Tyre.*

Hel. You shall not need, my fellow peers of Tyre,
Further to question me of your king's departure:
His seal'd commission, left in trust with me,
Doth speak sufficiently he 's gone to travel.
Thal. [*Aside.*] How! the King gone!
Hel. If further yet you will be satisfied,
Why, as it were unlicens'd of your loves,
He would depart, I 'll give some light unto you.
Being at Antioch ——
Thal. [*Aside.*] What from Antioch?
Hel. Royal Antiochus — on what cause I know not —

Took some displeasure at him; at least he judged so:
And doubting lest that he had err'd or sinn'd,
To show his sorrow, he 'ld correct himself;
So puts himself unto the shipman's toil,
With whom each minute threatens life or death.
Thal. [*Aside.*] Well, I perceive
I shall not be hang'd now, although I would;
But since he 's gone, the King's ears it must please:
He 'scap'd the land, to perish at the sea.
I 'll present myself. Peace to the lords of Tyre!
Hel. Lord Thaliard from Antiochus is welcome.
Thal. From him I come
With message unto princely Pericles;
But since my landing I have understood
Your lord has betook himself to unknown travels,
My message must return from whence it came.
Hel. We have no reason to desire it,
Commended to our master, not to us:
Yet, ere you shall depart, this we desire,
As friends to Antioch, we may feast in Tyre. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Tarsus. A room in the Governor's house.*

Enter CLEON, *the Governor of Tarsus, with* DIONYZA, *and others.*

Cle. My Dionyza, shall we rest us here,
And by relating tales of others' griefs,
See if 't will teach us to forget our own?
Dio. That were to blow at fire in hope to quench it;
For who digs hills because they do aspire
Throws down one mountain to cast up a higher.
O my distressed lord, even such our griefs are;
Here they 're but felt, and seen with mischief's eyes,
But like to groves, being topp'd, they higher rise.
Cle. O Dionyza,
Who wanteth food, and will not say he wants it,
Or can conceal his hunger till he famish?
Our tongues and sorrows do sound deep
Our woes into the air; our eyes do weep,
Till tongues fetch breath that may proclaim them louder;
That, if heaven slumber while their creatures want,
They may awake their helps to comfort them.
I 'll then discourse our woes, felt several years,
And wanting breath to speak help me with tears.
Dio. I 'll do my best, sir.
Cle. This Tarsus, o'er which I have the government,
A city on whom plenty held full hand,

For riches strew'd herself even in the streets:
Whose towers bore heads so high they kiss'd the clouds,
And strangers ne'er beheld but wonder'd at;
Whose men and dames so jetted and adorn'd,
Like one another's glass to trim them by:
Their tables were stor'd full, to glad the sight,
And not so much to feed on as delight;
All poverty was scorn'd, and pride so great,
The name of help grew odious to repeat.
Dio. O, 't is too true.
Cle. But see what heaven can do! By this our change,
These mouths, who but of late, earth, sea, and air,
Were all too little to content and please,
Although they gave their creatures in abundance,
As houses are defiled for want of use,
They are now starved for want of exercise:
Those palates who, not yet two summers younger,
Must have inventions to delight the taste,
Would now be glad of bread, and beg for it:
Those mothers who, to nousle up their babes,
Thought nought too curious, are ready now
To eat those little darlings whom they lov'd.
So sharp are hunger's teeth, that man and wife
Draw lots who first shall die to lengthen life:
Here stands a lord, and there a lady weeping;
Here many sink, yet those which see them fall
Have scarce strength left to give them burial.
Is not this true?
Dio. Our cheeks and hollow eyes do witness it.
Cle. O, let those cities that of plenty's cup
And her prosperities so largely taste,
With their superfluous riots, hear these tears!
The misery of Tarsus may be theirs.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. Where 's the Lord Governor?
Cle. Here.
Speak out thy sorrows which thou bring'st in haste,
For comfort is too far for us to expect.
Lord. We have descried, upon our neighbouring shore,
A portly sail of ships make hitherward.
Cle. I thought as much.
One sorrow never comes but brings an heir,
That may succeed as his inheritor;
And so in ours: some neighbouring nation,
Taking advantage of our misery,

---

[26] *jetted:* thrust out, strutted.

Hath stuff'd these hollow vessels with their power,
To beat us down, the which are down already;
And make a conquest of unhappy me,
Whereas no glory 's got to overcome.
Lord. That 's the least fear; for, by the semblance
Of their white flags display'd, they bring us peace,
And come to us as favourers, not as foes.
Cle. Thou speak'st like him 's untutor'd to repeat:
Who makes the fairest show means most deceit.
But bring they what they will and what they can,
What need we fear?
The ground 's the lowest, and we are half way there.
Go tell their general we attend him here,
To know for what he comes, and whence he comes,
And what he craves.
Lord. I go, my lord. [*Exit.*
Cle. Welcome is peace, if he on peace consist;
If wars, we are unable to resist.

Enter Pericles *with* Attendants.

Per. Lord Governor, for so we hear you are,
Let not our ships and number of our men
Be like a beacon fired to amaze your eyes.
We have heard your miseries as far as Tyre,
And seen the desolation of your streets:
Nor come we to add sorrow to your tears,
But to relieve them of their heavy load;
And these our ships, you happily may think
Are like the Trojan horse was stuff'd within
With bloody veins, expecting overthrow,
Are stor'd with corn to make your needy bread,
And give them life whom hunger starv'd half dead.
All. The gods of Greece protect you!
And we 'll pray for you.
Per. Arise, I pray you, rise:
We do not look for reverence, but for love,
And harbourage for ourself, our ships, and men.
Cle. The which when any shall not gratify,
Or pay you with unthankfulness in thought,
Be it our wives, our children, or ourselves,
The curse of heaven and men succeed their evils!
Till when, — the which I hope shall ne'er be seen, —
Your grace is welcome to our town and us.
Per. Which welcome we 'll accept; feast here awhile,
Until our stars that frown lend us a smile. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Enter GOWER.

Gow. Here have you seen a mighty king
His child, I wis, to incest bring;
A better prince and benign lord,
That will prove awful both in deed and word.
Be quiet then as men should be,
Till he hath pass'd necessity.
I 'll show you those in troubles reign,
Losing a mite, a mountain gain.
The good in conversation,
To whom I give my benison,
Is still at Tarsus, where each man
Thinks all is writ he speken can;
And, to remember what he does,
Build his statue to make him glorious:
But tidings to the contrary
Are brought your eyes; what need speak I?

DUMB SHOW.

Enter at one door PERICLES *talking with* CLEON; *all the train with them. Enter at another door a* Gentleman, *with a letter to* PERICLES; PERICLES *shows the letter to* CLEON; *gives the* Messenger *a reward, and knights him. Exit* PERICLES *at one door, and* CLEON *at another.*

Good Helicane, that stay'd at home,
Not to eat honey like a drone
From others' labours; for though he strive
To killen bad, keep good alive,
And to fulfil his prince' desire;
Sends word of all that haps in Tyre:
How Thaliard came full bent with sin
And had intent to murder him;
And that in Tarsus was not best
Longer for him to make his rest.
He, doing so, put forth to seas,
Where when men been, there 's seldom ease;
For now the wind begins to blow;
Thunder above and deeps below
Make such unquiet, that the ship
Should house him safe is wrack'd and split;
And he, good prince, having all lost,
By waves from coast to coast is tost:

---

[2] *I wis* = I believe.
[12] *speken* = to speak, the O. E. infinitive. These prologues of Gower's are purposely somewhat archaic in form.
[19] *for though he strive* = because he did strive.

All perishen of man, of pelf,
Ne aught escapen but himself;
Till fortune, tir'd with doing bad,
Threw him ashore, to give him glad:
And here he comes. What shall be next,
Pardon old Gower, — this longs the text. [*Exit.*

Scene I. *Pentapolis. An open place by the sea-side.*

Enter Pericles, *wet.*

Per. Yet cease your ire, you angry stars of heaven!
Wind, rain, and thunder, remember, earthly man
Is but a substance that must yield to you;
And I, as fits my nature, do obey you:
Alas, the sea hath cast me on the rocks,
Wash'd me from shore to shore, and left me breath
Nothing to think on but ensuing death:
Let it suffice the greatness of your powers
To have bereft a prince of all his fortunes;
And having thrown him from your watery grave,
Here to have death in peace is all he 'll crave.

Enter three Fishermen.

First Fish. What, ho, Pilch!

Sec. Fish. Ha, come and bring away the nets!

First Fish. What, Patch-breech, I say!

Third Fish. What say you, master?

First Fish. Look how thou stirrest now! come away, or I 'll fetch thee with a wanion.

Third Fish. 'Faith, master, I am thinking of the poor men that were cast away before us even now.

First Fish. Alas, poor souls, it griev'd my heart to hear what pitiful cries they made to us to help them, when, well-a-day, we could scarce help ourselves.

Third Fish. Nay, master, said not I as much when I saw the porpus how he bounc'd and tumbled? they say they 're half fish, half flesh: a plague on them, they ne'er come but I look to be wash'd. Master, I marvel how the fishes live in the sea.

First Fish. Why, as men do a-land; the great ones eat up the little ones: I can compare our rich misers to nothing so fitly as to a whale; a' plays and tumbles, driving the poor fry before him, and at last devours them all at a mouthful: such whales have I heard on o' the land, who never leave gaping till they 've swallowed the whole parish, church, steeple, bells, and all.

[35, 36] *perishen, escapen:* the O. E. forms. See the note on line 12.
[17] *with a wanion:* a slang objurgation, equivalent to our "with a vengeance."

Per. [*Aside.*] A pretty moral.

Third Fish. But, master, if I had been the sexton, I would have been that day in the belfry.

Sec. Fish. Why, man?

Third Fish. Because he should have swallowed me too: and when I had been in his belly, I would have kept such a jangling of the bells, that he should never have left, till he cast bells, steeple, church, and parish, up again. But if the good King Simonides were of my mind, —

Per. [*Aside.*] Simonides!

Third Fish. We would purge the land of these drones, that rob the bee of her honey.

Per. [*Aside.*] How from the finny subject of the sea
These fishers tell the infirmities of men;
And from their watery empire recollect
All that may men approve or men detect!
Peace be at your labour, honest fishermen.

Sec. Fish. Honest! good fellow, what 's that? If it be a day fits you, search out of the calendar, and nobody look after it.

Per. May see the sea hath cast upon your coast.

Sec. Fish. What a drunken knave was the sea to cast thee in our way!

Per. A man whom both the waters and the wind,
In that vast tennis-court, have made the ball
For them to play upon, entreats you pity him;
He asks of you, that never used to beg.

First Fish. No, friend, cannot you beg? Here 's them in our country of Greece gets more with begging than we can do with working.

Sec. Fish. Canst thou catch any fishes, then?

Per. I never practised it.

Sec. Fish. Nay, then thou wilt starve, sure; for here 's nothing to be got now-a-days, unless thou canst fish for 't.

Per. What I have been I have forgot to know;
But what I am, want teaches me to think on:
A man throng'd up with cold: my veins are chill,
And have no more of life than may suffice
To give my tongue that heat to ask your help;
Which if you shall refuse, when I am dead,
For that I am a man, pray see me buried.

First Fish. Die quoth-a? Now gods forbid! I have a gown here; come, put it on; keep thee warm. Now, afore me, a handsome fellow! Come, thou shalt go home, and we 'll have flesh for holidays, fish for fasting-days, and moreo'er puddings and flap-jacks, and thou shalt be welcome.

52 *search out*, etc. This speech and the next are corrupted past comprehension.
69 *throng'd up:* inexplicable; unless it may be loosely used for drawn up, pinched.

Per. I thank you, sir.

Sec. Fish. Hark you, my friend; you said you could not beg.

Per. I did but crave.

Sec. Fish. But crave! Then I'll turn craver too, and so I shall 'scape whipping.

Per. Why, are all your beggars whipped, then?

Sec. Fish. O, not all, my friend, not all; for if all your beggars were whipped, I would wish no better office than to be beadle. But, master, I'll go draw up the net.

[*Exit with Third Fisherman.*

Per. [*Aside.*] How well this honest mirth becomes their labour!

First Fish. Hark you, sir, do you know where ye are?

Per. Not well.

First Fish. Why, I'll tell you: this is called Pentapolis, and our king the good Simonides.

Per. The good King Simonides, do you call him?

First Fish. Ay, sir; and he deserves so to be call'd for his peaceable reign and good government.

Per. He is a happy king, since he gains from his subjects the name of good by his government. How far is his court distant from this shore?

First Fish. Marry, sir, half a day's journey: and I'll tell you, he hath a fair daughter, and to-morrow is her birth-day; and there are princes and knights come from all parts of the world to just and tourney for her love.

Per. Were my fortunes equal to my desires, I could wish to make one there.

First Fish. O, sir, things must be as they may; and what a man cannot get, he may lawfully deal for — his wife's soul.

Re-enter Second *and* Third Fishermen, *drawing up a net.*

Sec. Fish. Help, master, help! here's a fish hangs in the net, like a poor man's right in the law; 't will hardly come out. Ha! bots on 't, 't is come at last, and 't is turned to a rusty armour.

Per. An armour, friends! I pray you, let me see it.
Thanks, fortune, yet, that, after all my crosses,
Thou giv'st me somewhat to repair myself;
And though it was mine own, part of my heritage,
Which my dead father did bequeath to me,
With this strict charge, even as he left his life,
"Keep it, my Pericles; it hath been a shield
'Twixt me and death;" — and pointed to this brace; —

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[107] *and what a man cannot get*, etc. Perhaps this, like some sage utterances nowadays, is so sententious as to be above comprehension; but more probably it is corrupt.

"For that it sav'd me, keep it; in like necessity —
The which the gods protect thee from! — may defend thee."
It kept where I kept, I so dearly loved it;
Till the rough seas, that spare not any man,
Took it in rage, though calm'd have given 't again:
I thank thee for 't: my shipwrack now 's no ill,
Since I have here my father's gift in 's will.
First Fish. What mean you, sir?
Per. To beg of you, kind friends, this coat of worth,
For it was sometime target to a king;
I know it by this mark. He lov'd me dearly,
And for his sake I wish the having of it;
And that you 'ld guide me to your sovereign's court,
Where with it I may appear a gentleman;
And if that ever my low fortune 's better,
I 'll pay your bounties; till then rest your debtor.
First Fish. Why, wilt thou tourney for the lady?
Per. I 'll show the virtue I have borne in arms.
First Fish. Why, do 'e take it, and the gods give thee good on 't!
Sec. Fish. Ay, but hark you, my friend; 't was we that made up this garment through the rough seams of the waters: there are certain condolements, certain vails. I hope, sir, if you thrive, you 'll remember from whence you had it.
Per. Believe 't, I will.
By your furtherance I am clothed in steel;
And, spite of all the rapture of the sea,
This jewel holds his building on my arm:
Unto thy value I will mount myself
Upon a courser, whose delightful steps
Shall make the gazer joy to see him tread.
Only, my friend, I yet am unprovided
Of a pair of bases.
Sec. Fish. We 'll sure provide: thou shalt have my best gown to make thee a pair; and I 'll bring thee to the court myself.
Per. Then honour be but a goal to my will,
This day I 'll rise, or else add ill to ill. [*Exeunt.*

130 *target* = breast-plate. Goliath had "a target of brass between his shoulders."
147 *rapture* = robbery, violent seizure.
153 *bases* = a skirt worn by men-at-arms. It hung nearly to the knee.

Scene II. *The same. A public way or platform leading to the lists. A pavilion by the side of it for the reception of the* King, Princess, *Lords, etc.*

Enter Simonides, Thaisa, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Sim. Are the knights ready to begin the triumph?
First Lord. They are, my liege;
And stay your coming to present themselves.
Sim. Return them, we are ready; and our daughter,
In honour of whose birth these triumphs are,
Sits here, like beauty's child, whom nature gat
For men to see, and seeing wonder at. [*Exit a Lord.*
Thai. It pleaseth you, my royal father, to express
My commendations great, whose merit 's less.
Sim. It 's fit it should be so; for princes are
A model, which heaven makes like to itself:
As jewels lose their glory if neglected,
So princes their renowns if not respected.
'T is now your honour, daughter, to explain
The labour of each knight in his device.
Thai. Which, to preserve mine honour, I 'll perform.

Enter a Knight; *he passes over, and his* Squire *presents his shield to the* Princess.

Sim. Who is the first that doth prefer himself?
Thai. A knight of Sparta, my renowned father;
And the device he bears upon his shield
Is a black Ethiope reaching at the sun:
The word, "*Lux tua vita mihi.*"
Sim. He loves you well that holds his life of you.
[*The second Knight passes over.*
Who is the second that presents himself?
Thai. A prince of Macedon, my royal father;
And the device he bears upon his shield
Is an arm'd knight that 's conquer'd by a lady;
The motto thus, in Spanish, "*Piu por dulzura que por fuerza.*"
[*The Third Knight passes over.*
Sim. And what 's the third?
Thai. The third of Antioch;
And his device, a wreath of chivalry;
The word, "*Me pompæ provexit apex.*"
[*The Fourth Knight passes over.*
Sim. What is the fourth?
Thai. A burning torch that 's turned upside down;
The word, "*Quod me alit, me extinguit.*"

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21 *Lux tua*, etc. = Thy light is my life. (Lat.)
27 *Piu por*, etc. = More by gentleness than by force. The Spanish is mixed with Italian.
30 *Me pompæ*, etc. = Glory leads me on. (Lat.)
33 *Quod me alit*, etc. = That which nourishes me extinguishes me. (Lat.)

Sim. Which shows that beauty hath his power and will,
Which can as well inflame as it can kill.
[*The Fifth Knight passes over.*

Thai. The fifth, an hand environed with clouds,
Holding out gold that 's by the touchstone tried;
The motto thus, "*Sic spectanda fides.*"
[*The Sixth Knight, Pericles, passes over.*

Sim. And what 's
The sixth and last, the which the knight himself
With such a graceful courtesy deliver'd?
Thai. He seems to be a stranger; but his present is
A wither'd branch, that 's only green at top;
The motto, "*In hac spe vivo.*"
Sim. A pretty moral;
From the dejected state wherein he is,
He hopes by you his fortunes yet may flourish.
First Lord. He had need mean better than his outward show
Can any way speak in his just commend;
For by his rusty outside he appears
To have practised more the whipstock than the lance.
Sec. Lord. He well may be a stranger, for he comes
To an honour'd triumph strangely furnished.
Third Lord. And on set purpose let his armour rust
Until this day, to scour it in the dust.
Sim. Opinion 's but a fool, that makes us scan
The outward habit by the inward man.
But stay, the knights are coming: we will withdraw
Into the gallery. [*Exeunt.*
[*Great shouts within, and all cry* "The mean knight!"

Scene III. *The same. A hall of state: a banquet prepared.*

Enter Simonides, Thaisa, Lords, Attendants, *and* Knights, *from tilting.*

Sim. Knights,
To say you 're welcome were superfluous.
To place upon the volume of your deeds,
As in a title-page, your worth in arms,
Were more than you expect, or more than 's fit,
Since every worth in show commends itself.
Prepare for mirth, for mirth becomes a feast:
You are princes and my guests.
Thai. But you, my knight and guest;
To whom this wreath of victory I give,
And crown you king of this day's happiness.
Per. 'T is more by fortune, lady, than by merit.

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38 *Sic spectanda fides* = Thus faith is to be tested. (Lat.)
44 *In hac spe vivo* = In this hope I live. (Lat.)

Sim. Call it by what you will, the day is yours;
And here, I hope, is none that envies it.
In framing an artist, art hath thus decreed,
To make some good, but others to exceed;
And you are her labour'd scholar. Come, queen o' th' feast, —
For, daughter, so you are, — here take your place:
Marshal the rest, as they deserve their grace.
Knights. We are honour'd much by good Simonides.
Sim. Your presence glads our days: honour we love;
For who hates honour hates the gods above.
Marshal. Sir, yonder is your place.
Per. Some other is more fit.
First Knight. Contend not, sir; for we are gentlemen
That neither in our hearts nor outward eyes
Envy the great nor do the low despise.
Per. You are right courteous knights.
Sim. Sit, sir, sit.
Per. By Jove, I wonder, that is king of thoughts,
These cates resist me, she but thought upon.
Thai. By Juno, that is queen of marriage,
All viands that I eat do seem unsavoury,
Wishing him my meat. Sure, he 's a gallant gentleman.
Sim. He 's but a country gentleman;
Has done no more than other knights have done;
Has broken a staff or so; so let it pass.
Thai. To me he seems like diamond to glass.
Per. Yon king 's to me like to my father's picture,
Which tells me in that glory once he was;
Had princes sit, like stars, about his throne,
And he the sun, for them to reverence;
None that beheld him, but, like lesser lights,
Did vail their crowns to his supremacy:
Where now his son 's like a glow-worm in the night,
The which hath fire in darkness, none in light:
Whereby I see that Time 's the king of men,
He 's both their parent, and he is their grave,
And gives them what he will, not what they crave.
Sim. What, are you merry, knights?
Knights. Who can be other in this royal presence?
Sim. Here, with a cup that 's stor'd unto the brim, —
As you do love, fill to your mistress' lips, —
We drink this health to you.
Knights. We thank your grace.
Sim. Yet pause awhile:

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29 *cates* = cakes.
42 *vail* = lower.

Yon knight doth sit too melancholy,
As if the entertainment in our court
Had not a show might countervail his worth.
Note it not you, Thaisa?
Thai. What is it
To me, my father?
Sim. O, attend, my daughter:
Princes in this should live like gods above,
Who freely give to every one that comes
To honour them:
And princes not doing so are like to gnats,
Which make a sound, but kill'd are wonder'd at.
Therefore to make his entrance more sweet,
Here, say we drink this standing-bowl of wine to him.
Thai. Alas, my father, it befits not me
Unto a stranger knight to be so bold:
He may my proffer take for an offence,
Since men take women's gifts for impudence.
Sim. How!
Do as I bid you, or you'll move me else.
Thai. [*Aside.*] Now, by the gods, he could not please me better.
Sim. And furthermore tell him, we desire to know of him,
Of whence he is, his name and parentage.
Thai. The King my father, sir, has drunk to you.
Per. I thank him.
Thai. Wishing it so much blood unto your life.
Per. I thank both him and you, and pledge him freely.
Thai. And further he desires to know of you,
Of whence you are, your name and parentage.
Per. A gentleman of Tyre; my name, Pericles;
My education been in arts and arms;
Who, looking for adventures in the world,
Was by the rough seas reft of ships and men,
And after shipwrack driven upon this shore.
Thai. He thanks your grace; names himself Pericles,
A gentleman of Tyre,
Who only by misfortune of the seas
Bereft of ships and men, cast on this shore.
Sim. Now, by the gods, I pity his misfortune,
And will awake him from his melancholy.
Come, gentlemen, we sit too long on trifles,
And waste the time, which looks for other revels.
Even in your armours, as you are address'd,
Will very well become a soldier's dance.

64 *entrance:* a quadrisyllable, as if *enter-ance.*

I will not have excuse, with saying this
Loud music is too harsh for ladies' heads,
Since they love men in arms as well as beds. [*The Knights dance.*
So, this was well ask'd, 't was so well perform'd.
Come, sir;
Here is a lady that wants breathing too:
And I have heard, you knights of Tyre
Are excellent in making ladies trip;
And that their measures are as excellent.
Per. In those that practice them they are, my lord.
Sim. O, that 's as much as you would be denied
Of your fair courtesy. [*The Knights and Ladies dance.*
Unclasp, unclasp:
Thanks, gentlemen, to all; all have done well,
[*To Per.*] But you the best. Pages and lights, to conduct
These knights unto their several lodgings! [*To Per.*] Yours, sir,
We have given order to be next our own.
Per. I am at your grace's pleasure.
Sim. Princes, it is too late to talk of love;
And that 's the mark I know you level at:
Therefore each one betake him to his rest;
To-morrow all for speeding do their best. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Tyre. A room in the Governor's house.*

Enter HELICANUS *and* ESCANES.

Hel. No, Escanes, know this of me,
Antiochus from incest lived not free:
For which, the most high gods not minding longer
To withhold the vengeance that they had in store,
Due to this heinous capital offence,
Even in the height and pride of all his glory,
When he was seated in a chariot
Of an inestimable value, and his daughter with him,
A fire from heaven came and shrivell'd up
Their bodies, even to loathing; for they so stunk,
That all those eyes ador'd them ere their fall
Scorn now their hand should give them burial.
Esca. 'T was very strange.
Hel. And yet but justice; for though
This king were great, his greatness was no guard
To bar heaven's shaft, but sin had his reward.
Esca. 'T is very true.

101 *breathing* = exercise.
11 *those eyes ador'd them* = those eyes which adored them.

Enter two or three Lords.

First Lord. See, not a man in private conference
Or council has respect with him but he.
Sec. Lord. It shall no longer grieve without reproof.
Third Lord. And curs'd be he that will not second it.
First Lord. Follow me, then. Lord Helicane, a word.
Hel. With me? and welcome: happy day, my lords.
First Lord. Know that our griefs are risen to the top,
And now at length they overflow their banks.
Hel. Your griefs! for what? wrong not your prince you love.
First Lord. Wrong not yourself, then, noble Helicane;
But if the Prince do live, let us salute him,
Or know what ground 's made happy by his breath.
If in the world he live, we 'll seek him out;
If in his grave he rest, we 'll find him there;
And be resolved he lives to govern us,
Or dead, give 's cause to mourn his funeral,
And leave us to our free election.
Sec. Lord. Whose death indeed 's the strongest in our censure:
And knowing this kingdom is without a head,—
Like goodly buildings left without a roof
Soon fall to ruin,—your noble self,
That best know how to rule and how to reign,
We thus submit unto,—our sovereign.
All. Live, noble Helicane!
Hel. For honour's cause, forbear your suffrages:
If that you love Prince Pericles, forbear.
Take I your wish, I leap into the seas,
Where 's hourly trouble for a minute's ease.
A twelvemonth longer, let me entreat you to
Forbear the absence of your king;
If in which time expired, he not return,
I shall with aged patience bear your yoke.
But if I cannot win you to this love,
Go search like nobles, like noble subjects,
And in your search spend your adventurous worth;
Whom if you find, and win unto return,
You shall like diamonds sit about his crown.
First Lord. To wisdom he 's a fool that will not yield;
And since Lord Helicane enjoineth us,
We with our travels will endeavour us.
Hel. Then you love us, we you, and we 'll clasp hands:
When peers thus knit, a kingdom ever stands. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Pentapolis. A room in the palace.*

Enter SIMONIDES, *reading a letter, at one door: the* Knights *meet him.*

First Knight. Good morrow to the good Simonides.
Sim. Knights, from my daughter this I let you know,
That for this twelvemonth she 'll not undertake
A married life.
Her reason to herself is only known,
Which yet from her by no means can I get.
Sec. Knight. May we not get access to her, my lord?
Sim. 'Faith, by no means; she hath so strictly tied
Her to her chamber, that 't is impossible.
One twelve moons more she 'll wear Diana's livery;
This by the eye of Cynthia hath she vow'd,
And on her virgin honour will not break it.
Third Knight. Loath to bid farewell, we take our leaves.
[*Exeunt Knights.*
Sim. So,
They are well dispatch'd; now to my daughter's letter:
She tells me here, she 'll wed the stranger knight,
Or never more to view nor day nor light.
'T is well, mistress; your choice agrees with mine;
I like that well: nay, how absolute she 's in 't,
Not minding whether I dislike or no!
Well, I do commend her choice;
And will no longer have it be delay'd.
Soft! here he comes: I must dissemble it.

Enter PERICLES.

Per. All fortune to the good Simonides!
Sim. To you as much, sir! I am beholding to you
For your sweet music this last night: I do
Protest my ears were never better fed
With such delightful pleasing harmony.
Per. It is your grace's pleasure to command;
Not my desert.
Sim. Sir, you are music's master.
Per. The worst of all her scholars, my good lord.
Sim. Let me ask you one thing:
What do you think of my daughter, sir?
Per. A most virtuous princess.
Sim. And she is fair too, is she not?
Per. As a fair day in summer, wondrous fair.
Sim. Sir, my daughter thinks very well of you;
Ay, so well, that you must be her master,
And she will be your scholar: therefore look to it.

Per. I am unworthy for her schoolmaster,
Sim. She thinks not so; peruse this writing else.
Per. [*Aside.*] What 's here?
A letter, that she loves the knight of Tyre!
'T is the King's subtilty to have my life.
O, seek not to entrap me, gracious lord,
A stranger and distressed gentleman,
That never aim'd so high to love your daughter,
But bent all offices to honour her.
Sim. Thou hast bewitch'd my daughter, and thou art
A villain.
Per. By the gods, I have not:
Never did thought of mine levy offence;
Nor never did my actions yet commence
A deed might gain her love or your displeasure.
Sim. Traitor, thou liest.
Per. Traitor!
Sim. Ay, traitor.
Per. Even in his throat — unless it be the King —
That calls me traitor, I return the lie.
Sim. [*Aside.*] Now, by the gods, I do applaud his courage.
Per. My actions are as noble as my thoughts,
That never relish'd of a base descent.
I came unto your court for honour's cause,
And not to be a rebel to her state;
And he that otherwise accounts of me,
This sword shall prove he 's honour's enemy.
Sim. No?
Here comes my daughter, she can witness it.

Enter THAISA.

Per. Then, as you are as virtuous as fair,
Resolve your angry father, if my tongue
Did e'er solicit, or my hand subscribe
To any syllable that made love to you.
Thai. Why, sir, say if you had,
Who takes offence at that would make me glad?
Sim. Yea, mistress, are you so peremptory?
[*Aside.*] I am glad on 't with all my heart. —
I 'll tame you; I 'll bring you in subjection.
Will you, not having my consent,
Bestow your love and your affections
Upon a stranger? [*Aside.*] who, for aught I know,
May be, nor can I think the contrary,
As great in blood as I myself. —
Therefore hear you, mistress; either frame
Your will to mine, — and you, sir, hear you,

Either be rul'd by me, or I will make you —
Man and wife :
Nay, come, your hands and lips must seal it too :
And being join'd, I 'll thus your hopes destroy ;
And for a further grief, — God give you joy ! —
What, are you both pleas'd?
Thai. Yes, if you love me, sir.
Per. Even as my life my blood that fosters it.
Sim. What, are you both agreed?
Both. Yes, if it please your majesty.
Sim. It pleaseth me so well, that I will see you wed ;
And then with what haste you can get you to bed. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter GOWER.

Gow. Now sleep yslaked hath the rout ;
No din but snores the house about,
Made louder by the o'er-fed breast
Of this most pompous marriage-feast.
The cat, with eyne of burning coal,
Now couches fore the mouse's hole ;
And crickets sing at the oven's mouth,
E'er the blither for their drouth.
Hymen hath brought the bride to bed,
Where, by the loss of maidenhead,
A babe is moulded. Be attent,
And time that is so briefly spent
With your fine fancies quaintly eche :
What 's dumb in show I 'll plain with speech.

DUMB SHOW.

Enter PERICLES *and* SIMONIDES, *at one door, with* Attendants ; a Messenger *meets them, kneels, and gives* PERICLES *a letter :* PERICLES *shows it* SIMONIDES ; *the* Lords *kneel to him. Then enter* THAISA *with child, with* LYCHORIDA *a nurse. The* KING *shows her the letter ; she rejoices : she and* PERICLES *take leave of her father, and depart with* LYCHORIDA *and their* Attendants. *Then exeunt* SIMONIDES *and the rest.*

By many a dern and painful perch,
Of Pericles the careful search,
By the four opposing coigns
Which the world together joins,
Is made with all due diligence
That horse and sail and high expense
Can stead the quest. At last from Tyre,

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5 *eyne* = eyes, the old plural form.
13 *eche* = eke.
15 *dern* = sad, dismal.
16 *Of Pericles*, etc. This line is the subject of " made, " line 19.

Fame answering the most strange inquire,
To the court of King Simonides
Are letters brought, the tenour these:
Antiochus and his daughter dead;
The men of Tyrus on the head
Of Helicanus would set on
The crown of Tyre, but he will none:
The mutiny he there hastes t' oppress;
Says to 'em, if King Pericles
Come not home in twice six moons,
He, obedient to their dooms,
Will take the crown. The sum of this,
Brought hither to Pentapolis,
Y-ravished the regions round,
And every one with claps 'gan sound,
"Our heir-apparent is a king!
Who dream'd, who thought of such a thing?"
Brief, he must hence depart to Tyre:
His queen with child makes her desire —
Which who shall cross? — along to go:
Omit we all their dole and woe:
Lychorida, her nurse, she takes,
And so to sea. Their vessel shakes
On Neptune's billow; half the flood
Hath their keel cut: but fortune's mood
Varies again; the grisled north
Disgorges such a tempest forth,
That, as a duck for life that dives,
So up and down the poor ship drives:
The lady shrieks, and well-a-near
Does fall in travail with her fear:
And what ensues in this fell storm
Shall for itself itself perform.
I nill relate, action may
Conveniently the rest convey;
Which might not what by me is told.
In your imagination hold
This stage the ship, upon whose deck
The sea-tost Pericles appears to speak. [*Exit.*

SCENE I.

Enter PERICLES, *on shipboard.*

Per. Thou god of this great vast, rebuke these surges,
Which wash both heaven and hell; and thou, that hast

55 *action:* three syllables.

Upon the winds command, bind them in brass,
Having call'd them from the deep! O, still
Thy deafening, dreadful thunders; gently quench
Thy nimble, sulphurous flashes! O, how, Lychorida,
How does my queen? Thou stormest venomously;
Wilt thou spit all thyself? The seaman's whistle
Is as a whisper in the ears of death,
Unheard. Lychorida! — Lucina, O
Divinest patroness, and midwife gentle
To those that cry by night, convey thy deity
Aboard our dancing boat; make swift the pangs
Of my queen's travails!

Enter LYCHORIDA, *with an Infant.*

Now, Lychorida!
Lyc. Here is a thing too young for such a place,
Who, if it had conceit, would die, as I
Am like to do; take in your arms this piece
Of your dead queen.
Per. How, how, Lychorida!
Lyc. Patience, good sir; do not assist the storm.
Here 's all that is left living of your queen,
A little daughter: for the sake of it,
Be manly, and take comfort.
Per. O you gods!
Why do you make us love your goodly gifts,
And snatch them straight away? We here below
Recall not what we give, and therein may
Use honour with you.
Lyc. Patience, good sir,
Even for this charge.
Per. Now, mild may be thy life!
For a more blustrous birth had never babe:
Quiet and gentle thy conditions! for
Thou art the rudeliest welcome to this world
That ever was prince's child. Happy what follows!
Thou hast as chiding a nativity
As fire, air, water, earth, and heaven can make,
To herald thee from the womb: even at the first
Thy loss is more than can thy portage quit,
With all thou canst find here. Now, the good gods
Throw their best eyes upon 't!

Enter two Sailors.

First Sail. What courage, sir? God save you!
Per. Courage enough: I do not fear the flaw;
It hath done to me the worst. Yet, for the love
Of this poor infant, this fresh-new sea-farer,
I would it would be quiet.

First Sail. Slack the bolins there! Thou wilt not, wilt thou? Blow, and split thyself.

Sec. Sail. But sea-room, an the brine and cloudy billow kiss the moon, I care not.

First Sail. Sir, your queen must overboard: the sea works high, the wind is loud, and will not lie till the ship be clear'd o' th' dead.

Per. That 's your superstition.

First Sail. Pardon us, sir; with us at sea it hath been still observed: and we are strong in custom. Therefore briefly yield her; for she must overboard straight.

Per. As you think meet. Most wretched queen!

Lyc. Here she lies, sir.

Per. A terrible childbed hast thou had, my dear;
No light, no fire: the unfriendly elements
Forgot thee utterly: nor have I time
To give thee hallow'd to thy grave, but straight
Must cast thee, scarcely coffin'd, in the ooze;
Where, for a monument upon thy bones,
And e'er-remaining lamps, the belching whale
And humming water must o'erwhelm thy corpse,
Lying with simple shells. O Lychorida,
Bid Nestor bring me spices, ink and paper,
My casket and my jewels; and bid Nicander
Bring me the satin coffer: lay the babe
Upon the pillow: hie thee, whiles I say
A priestly farewell to her: suddenly, woman. [*Exit Lychorida.*

Sec. Sail. Sir, we have a chest beneath the hatches, caulk'd and bitum'd ready.

Per. I thank thee. Mariner, say what coast is this?

Sec. Sail. We are near Tarsus.

Per. Thither, gentle mariner,
Alter thy course for Tyre. When canst thou reach it?

Sec. Sail. By break of day, if the wind cease.

Per. O, make for Tarsus!
There will I visit Cleon, for the babe
Cannot hold out to Tyrus: there I 'll leave it
At careful nursing. Go thy ways, good mariner:
I 'll bring the body presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Ephesus. A room in* CERIMON'S *house.*

Enter CERIMON, *with a* Servant, *and some Persons who have been shipwrecked.*

Cer. Philemon, ho!

Enter PHILEMON.

Phil. Doth my lord call?

Cer. Get fire and meat for these poor men:
'T has been a turbulent and stormy night.
Serv. I have been in many; but such a night as this,
Till now, I ne'er endur'd.
Cer. Your master will be dead ere you return;
There 's nothing can be minister'd to nature
That can recover him. [*To Philemon.*] Give this to the 'pothecary,
And tell me how it works. [*Exeunt all but Cerimon.*

Enter two Gentlemen.

First Gent. Good morrow.
Sec. Gent. Good morrow to your lordship.
Cer. Gentlemen,
Why do you stir so early?
First Gent. Sir,
Our lodgings, standing bleak upon the sea,
Shook as the earth did quake;
The very principals did seem to rend,
And all to topple: pure surprise and fear
Made me to quit the house.
Sec. Gent. That is the cause we trouble you so early;
'T is not our husbandry.
Cer. O, you say well.
First Gent. But I much marvel that your lordship, having
Rich tire about you, should at these early hours
Shake off the golden slumber of repose.
'T is most strange,
Nature should be so conversant with pain,
Being thereto not compell'd.
Cer. I hold it ever,
Virtue and cunning were endowments greater
Than nobleness and riches: careless heirs
May the two latter darken and expend;
But immortality attends the former,
Making a man a god. 'T is known, I ever
Have studied physic, through which secret art,
By turning o'er authorities, I have,
Together with my practice, made familiar
To me and to my aid the blest infusions
That dwell in vegetives, in metals, stones;
And I can speak of the disturbances
That nature works, and of her cures; which doth give me
A more content in course of true delight
Than to be thirsty after tottering honour,

20 *husbandry* = thrift.

Or tie my treasure up in silken bags,
To please the Fool and Death.
Sec. Gent. Your honour has through Ephesus pour'd forth
Your charity, and hundreds call themselves
Your creatures, who by you have been restor'd:
And not your knowledge, your personal pain, but even
Your purse, still open, hath built Lord Cerimon
Such strong renown as time shall ne'er decay.

Enter two or three Servants *with a chest.*

First Serv. So; lift there.
Cer. What is that?
First Serv. Sir, even now
Did the sea toss upon our shore this chest:
'T is of some wrack.
Cer. Set 't down, let 's look upon 't.
Sec. Gent. 'T is like a coffin, sir.
Cer. Whate'er it be,
'T is wondrous heavy. Wrench it open straight:
If the sea's stomach be o'ercharg'd with gold,
'T is a good constraint of fortune it belches upon us.
Sec. Gent. 'T is so, my lord.
Cer. How close 't is caulk'd and bitum'd!
Did the sea cast it up?
First Serv. I never saw so huge a billow, sir,
As toss'd it upon shore.
Cer. Wrench it open;
Soft! it smells most sweetly in my sense.
Sec. Gent. A delicate odour.
Cer. As ever hit my nostril. So, up with it.
O you most potent gods! what 's here? a corse!
First Gent. Most strange!
Cer. Shrouded in cloth of state; balm'd and entreasur'd
With full bags of spices! A passport too!
Apollo, perfect me in the characters! [*Reads from a scroll.*

"Here I give to understand,
If e'er this coffin drive a-land,
I, King Pericles, have lost
This queen, worth all our mundane cost.
Who finds her, give her burying;
She was the daughter of a king:
Besides this treasure for a fee,
The gods requite his charity!"

If thou liv'st, Pericles, thou hast a heart
That even cracks for woe! This chanc'd to-night.

---

[42] *the Fool and Death:* an allusion to an awful grotesque masque or mummery called the Dance of Death, in which the Fool or Jester was a prominent personage.
[55] *constraint.* This line is inexplicable and seems irreclaimable.

Sec. Gent. Most likely, sir.
Cer. Nay, certainly to-night;
For look how fresh she looks! They were too rough
That threw her in the sea. Make a fire within:
Fetch hither all my boxes in my closet. [*Exit a Servant.*
Death may usurp on nature many hours,
And yet the fire of life kindle again
The o'erpress'd spirits. I heard of an Egyptian
. . . .
That had nine hours lien dead,
Who was by good appliance recovered.

Re-enter a Servant, *with boxes, napkins, and fire.*

Well said, well said — The fire and cloths. —
The rough and woeful music that we have,
Cause it to sound, beseech you. —
The vial once more: how thou stirr'st, thou block! —
The music there! — I pray you, give her air.
Gentlemen,
This queen will live: nature awakes; a warmth
Breathes out of her: she hath not been entranc'd
Above five hours: see how she gins to blow
Into life's flower again!
First Gent. The heavens,
Through you, increase our wonder and set up
Your fame for ever.
Cer. She is alive; behold,
Her eyelids, cases to those heavenly jewels
Which Pericles hath lost,
Begin to part their fringes of bright gold;
The diamonds of a most praised water
Do appear, to make the world twice rich. Live,
And make us weep to hear your fate, fair creature,
Rare as you seem to be. [*She moves.*
Thai. O dear Diana,
Where am I? Where 's my lord? What world is this?
Sec. Gent. Is not this strange?
First Gent. Most rare.
Cer. Hush, my gentle neighbours!
Lend me your hands; to the next chamber bear her.
Get linen: now this matter must be look'd to,
For her relapse is mortal. Come, come;
And Æsculapius guide us! [*Exeunt, carrying her away.*

---

84 *I heard of an Egyptian.* After these words a line or more has probably been lost.
87 *Well said* = Well done.

SCENE III. *Tarsus. A room in* CLEON'S *house.*

Enter PERICLES, CLEON, DIONYZA, *and* LYCHORIDA, *with* MARINA *in her arms.*

Per. Most honour'd Cleon, I must needs be gone;
My twelve months are expir'd, and Tyrus stands
In a litigious peace. You, and your lady,
Take from my heart all thankfulness! The gods
Make up the rest upon you!
Cle. Your shafts of fortune, though they hurt you mortally,
Yet glance full wanderingly on us.
Dion. O your sweet queen!
That the strict fates had pleas'd you had brought her hither,
To have bless'd mine eyes with her!
Per. We cannot but obey
The powers above us. Could I rage and roar
As doth the sea she lies in, yet the end
Must be as 't is. My gentle babe Marina, whom,
For she was born at sea, I have nam'd so, here
I charge your charity withal, leaving her
The infant of your care; beseeching you
To give her princely training, that she may be
Manner'd as she is born.
Cle. Fear not, my lord, but think
Your grace, that fed my country with your corn,
For which the people's prayers still fall upon you,
Must in your child be thought on. If neglection
Should therein make me vile, the common body,
By you relieved, would force me to my duty:
But if to that my nature need a spur,
The gods revenge it upon me and mine,
To the end of generation!
Per. I believe you;
Your honour and your goodness teach me to 't,
Without your vows. Till she be married, madam,
By bright Diana, whom we honour, all
Unscissar'd shall this hair of mine remain,
Though I show ill in 't. So I take my leave.
Good madam, make me blessed in your care
In bringing up my child.
Dion. I have one myself,
Who shall not be more dear to my respect
Than yours, my lord.
Per. Madam, my thanks and prayers.

---

13 *For she was born* = Because she was born; not a parenthetical clause.
20 *neglection* = neglect: used, if not fabricated, merely for the rhythm's sake.

Cle. We 'll bring your grace e'en to the edge o' th' shore,
Then give you up to the mask'd Neptune and
The gentlest winds of heaven.
Per. I will embrace
Your offer. Come, dear'st madam. O, no tears,
Lychorida, no tears:
Look to your little mistress, on whose grace
You may depend hereafter. Come, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Ephesus. A room in* CERIMON'S *house.*

Enter CERIMON *and* THAISA.

Cer. Madam, this letter, and some certain jewels,
Lay with you in your coffer: which are now
At your command. Know you the character?
Thai. It is my lord's.
That I was shipp'd at sea, I well remember,
Even on my eaning time; but whether there
Deliver'd, by the holy gods,
I cannot rightly say. But since King Pericles,
My wedded lord, I ne'er shall see again,
A vestal livery will I take me to,
And never more have joy.
Cer. Madam, if this you purpose as ye speak,
Diana's temple is not distant far,
Where you may abide till your date expire.
Moreover, if you please, a niece of mine
Shall there attend you.
Thai. My recompense is thanks, that 's all;
Yet my good will is great, though the gift small. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Enter GOWER.

Gow. Imagine Pericles arriv'd at Tyre,
Welcom'd and settled to his own desire.
His woeful queen we leave at Ephesus,
Unto Diana there a votaress.
Now to Marina bend your mind,
Whom our fast-growing scene must find
At Tarsus, and by Cleon train'd
In music, letters; who hath gain'd
Of education all the grace,
Which makes her both the heart and place

---

6 *eaning time* = time of delivery.

Of general wonder. But, alack,
That monster envy, oft the wrack
Of earned praise, Marina's life
Seeks to take off by treason's knife.
And in this kind hath our Cleon
One daughter, and a wench full grown,
Even ripe for marriage-rite; this maid
Hight Philoten: and it is said
For certain in our story, she
Would ever with Marina be:
Be 't when she weav'd the sleided silk
With fingers long, small, white as milk;
Or when she would with sharp needle wound
The cambric, which she made more sound
By hurting it; or when to the lute
She sung, and made the night-bird mute,
That still records with moan; or when
She would with rich and constant pen
Vail to her mistress Dian; still
This Philoten contends in skill
With absolute Marina: so
With the dove of Paphos might the crow
Vie feathers white. Marina gets
All praises, which are paid as debts,
And not as given. This so darks
In Philoten all graceful marks,
That Cleon's wife, with envy rare,
A present murderer does prepare
For good Marina, that her daughter
Might stand peerless by this slaughter.
The sooner her vile thoughts to stead,
Lychorida, our nurse, is dead:
And cursed Dionyza hath
The pregnant instrument of wrath
Prest for this blow. The unborn event
I do commend to your content:
Only I carry winged time
Post on the lame feet of my rhyme;
Which never could I so convey,
Unless your thoughts went on my way.
Dionyza does appear,
With Leonine, a murderer. [*Exit.*

---

21 *sleided* = untwisted.
27 *records* = sings. The allusion is to the nightingale.
29 *vail* = lower, submit. The passage is unintelligible.
45 *Prest* = ready. This French word, like *sans*, was often used in S.'s time.

SCENE I. *Tarsus. An open place near the sea-shore.*

Enter DIONYZA *and* LEONINE.

Dion. Thy oath remember; thou hast sworn to do 't:
'T is but a blow, which never shall be known.
Thou canst not do a thing in the world so soon,
To yield thee so much profit. Let not conscience,
Which is but cold, inflaming love i' thy bosom,
Inflame too nicely; nor let pity, which
Even women have cast off, melt thee, but be
A soldier to thy purpose.

Leon. I will do 't; but yet she is a goodly creature.

Dion. The fitter, then, the gods should have her. Here she comes weeping for her only mistress' death. Thou art resolv'd?

Leon. I am resolv'd.

Enter MARINA, *with a basket of flowers.*

Mar. No, I will rob Tellus of her weed,
To strew thy green with flowers: the yellows, blues,
The purple violets, and marigolds,
Shall as a carpet hang upon thy grave,
While summer-days do last. Ay me! poor maid,
Born in a tempest, when my mother died,
This world to me is like a lasting storm,
Whirring me from my friends.

Dion. How now, Marina! why do you keep alone?
How chance my daughter is not with you? Do not
Consume your blood with sorrowing: you have
A nurse of me. Lord, how your favour 's chang'd
With this unprofitable woe!
Come, give me your flowers, ere the sea mar it.
Walk with Leonine; the air is quick there,
And it pierces and sharpens the stomach. Come,
Leonine, take her by the arm, walk with her.

Mar. No, I pray you;
I 'll not bereave you of your servant.

Dion. Come, come;
I love the King your father, and yourself,
With more than foreign heart. We every day
Expect him here: when he shall come and find
Our paragon to all reports thus blasted,
He will repent the breadth of his great voyage;
Blame both my lord and me, that we have taken

---

[4] *Let not conscience*, etc. This passage is hopelessly confused, as also is Dionyza's next speech, perhaps by corruption, but not impossibly by the writer's heedlessness.

[13] *Tellus* = the earth.

[16] *a carpet* = tapestry, drapery. Floor carpets were unknown in S.'s day.

No care to your best courses. Go, I pray you,
Walk, and be cheerful once again; reserve
That excellent complexion, which did steal
The eyes of young and old. Care not for me;
I can go home alone.
Mar. Well, I will go;
But yet I have no desire to it.
Dion. Come, come, I know 't is good for you.
Walk half an hour, Leonine, at the least:
Remember what I have said.
Leon. I warrant you, madam.
Dion. I'll leave you, my sweet lady, for a while:
Pray, walk softly, do not heat your blood:
What! I must have a care of you.
Mar. My thanks, sweet madam.
[*Exit Dionyza.*
Is this wind westerly that blows?
Leon. South-west.
Mar. When I was born, the wind was north.
Leon. Was 't so?
Mar. My father, as nurse said, did never fear,
But cried "Good seamen!" to the sailors, galling
His kingly hands, haling ropes;
And, clasping to the mast, endur'd a sea
That almost burst the deck.
Leon. When was this?
Mar. When I was born:
Never was waves nor wind more violent;
And from the ladder-tackle washes off
A canvas-climber. "Ha!" says one, "wilt out?"
And with a dropping industry they skip
From stem to stern: the boatswain whistles, and
The master calls, and trebles their confusion.
Leon. Come, say your prayers.
Mar. What mean you?
Leon. If you require a little space for prayer,
I grant it: pray; but be not tedious;
For the gods are quick of ear, and I am sworn
To do my work with haste.
Mar. Why will you kill me?
Leon. To satisfy my lady.
Mar. Why would she have me kill'd?
Now, as I can remember, by my troth,
I never did her hurt in all my life:
I never spake bad word, nor did ill turn
To any living creature: believe me, la,

I never kill'd a mouse, nor hurt a fly:
I trod upon a worm against my will,
But I wept for it. How have I offended,
Wherein my death might yield her any profit,
Or my life imply her any danger?
Leon. My commission
Is not to reason of the deed, but do it.
Mar. You will not do 't for all the world, I hope.
You are well favour'd, and your looks foreshow
You have a gentle heart. I saw you lately,
When you caught hurt in parting two that fought:
Good sooth, it show'd well in you: do so now:
Your lady seeks my life; come you between,
And save poor me, the weaker.
Leon. I am sworn,
And will dispatch. [*He seizes her.*

Enter Pirates.

First Pirate. Hold, villain! [*Leonine runs away.*
Sec. Pirate. A prize! a prize!
Third Pirate. Half-part, mates, half-part.
Come, let 's have her aboard suddenly. [*Exeunt Pirates with Marina.*

Re-enter Leonine.

Leon. These roguing thieves serve the great pirate Valdes;
And they have seized Marina. Let her go:
There 's no hope she will return. I 'll swear she 's dead,
And thrown into the sea. But I 'll see further:
Perhaps they will but please themselves upon her,
Not carry her aboard. If she remain,
Whom they have ravish'd must by me be slain. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *Mytilene. A room in a brothel.*

Enter Pandar, Bawd, *and* Boult.

Pand. Boult!

Boult. Sir?

Pand. Search the market narrowly; Mytilene is full of gallants. We lost too much money this mart by being too wenchless.

Bawd. We were never so much out of creatures. We have but poor three, and they can do no more than they can do; and they with continual action are even as good as rotten.

Pand. Therefore let 's have fresh ones, whate'er we pay for them. If there be not a conscience to be us'd in every trade, we shall never prosper.

Bawd. Thou say'st true: 't is not our bringing up of poor bastards, — as, I think, I have brought up some eleven —

Coult. Ay, to eleven; and brought them down again. But shall I search the market?

Bawd. What else, man? The stuff we have, a strong wind will blow it to pieces, they are so pitifully sodden.

Pand. Thou say'st true; they 're too unwholesome, o' conscience. The poor Transylvanian is dead, that lay with the little baggage.

Boult. Ay, she quickly popp'd him; she made him roast-meat for worms. But I 'll go search the market. [*Exit.*

Pand. Three or four thousand chequins were as pretty a proportion to live quietly, and so give over.

Bawd. Why to give over, I pray you? is it a shame to get when we are old?

Pand. O, our credit comes not in like the commodity, nor the commodity wages not with the danger: therefore, if in our youths we could pick up some pretty estate, 't were not amiss to keep our door hatch'd. Besides, the sore terms we stand upon with the gods will be strong with us for giving over.

Bawd. Come, other sorts offend as well as we.

Pand. As well as we! ay, and better too; we offend worse. Neither is our profession any trade; it 's no calling. But here comes Boult.

Re-enter Boult, *with the* Pirates *and* Marina.

Boult. [*To Marina.*] Come your ways. My masters, you say she 's a virgin?

First Pirate. O, sir, we doubt it not.

Boult. Master, I have gone through for this piece, you see; if you like her, so: if not, I have lost my earnest.

Bawd. Boult, has she any qualities?

Boult. She has a good face, speaks well, and has excellent good clothes: there 's no further necessity of qualities can make her be refus'd.

Bawd. What 's her price, Boult?

Boult. I cannot be bated one doit of a thousand pieces.

Pand. Well, follow me, my masters, you shall have your money presently. Wife, take her in; instruct her what she has to do, that she may not be raw in her entertainment.

[*Exeunt Pandar and Pirates.*

Bawd. Boult, take you the marks of her, the colour of her hair, complexion, height, age, with warrant of her virginity; and cry, He that will give most shall have her first. Such a maidenhead were no cheap thing, if men were as they have been. Get this done as I command you.

---

14 *Ay, to eleven.* Incomprehensible, unless we should read, with a poor pun, "to *a leaven.*"

30 *hatched* = with the lower half shut.

39 *piece* = young woman.

Boult. Performance shall follow. [*Exit.*

Mar. Alack that Leonine was so slack, so slow!
He should have struck, not spoke; or that these pirates,
Not enough barbarous, had not o'erboard thrown me
For to seek my mother!

Bawd. Why lament you, pretty one?

Mar. That I am pretty.

Bawd. Come, the gods have done their part in you.

Mar. I accuse them not.

Bawd. You are light into my hands, where you are like to live.

Mar. The more my fault
To scape his hands where I was like to die.

Bawd. Ay, and you shall live in pleasure.

Mar. No.

Bawd. Yes, indeed shall you, and taste gentlemen of all fashions: you shall fare well; you shall have the difference of all complexions. What! do you stop your ears?

Mar. Are you a woman?

Bawd. What would you have me be, an I be not a woman?

Mar. An honest woman, or not a woman.

Bawd. Marry, whip thee, gosling: I think I shall have something to do with you. Come, you're a young foolish sapling, and must be bow'd as I would have you.

Mar. The gods defend me!

Bawd. If it please the gods to defend you by men, then men must comfort you; men must feed you; men must stir you up. Boult's return'd.

Re-enter BOULT.

Now, sir, hast thou cried her through the market?

Boult. I have cried her almost to the number of her hairs; I have drawn her picture with my voice.

Bawd. And I prithee tell me, how dost thou find the inclination of the people, especially of the younger sort?

Boult. 'Faith, they listened to me as they would have hearkened to their father's testament. There was a Spaniard's mouth so water'd, that he went to bed to her very description.

Bawd. We shall have him here to-morrow with his best ruff on.

Boult. To-night, to-night. But, mistress, do you know the French knight that cowers i' th' hams?

Bawd. Who, Monsieur Veroles?

Boult. Ay, he: he offer'd to cut a caper at the proclamation; but he made a groan at it, and swore he would see her to-morrow.

Bawd. Well, well; as for him, he brought his disease hither:

here he does but repair it. I know he will come in our shadow, to scatter his crowns in the sun.

Boult. Well, if we had of every nation a traveller, we should lodge them with this sign.

Bawd. [*To Mar.*] Pray you, come hither awhile. You have fortunes coming upon you. Mark me: you must seem to do that fearfully which you commit willingly; despise profit where you have most gain. To weep that you live as ye do makes pity in your lovers: seldom but that pity begets you a good opinion, and that opinion a mere profit.

Mar. I understand you not.

Boult. O, take her home, mistress, take her home: these blushes of hers must be quench'd with some present practice.

Bawd. Thou say'st true, i' faith, so they must; for your bride goes to that with shame which is her way to go with warrant.

Boult. 'Faith, some do, and some do not. But, mistress, if I have bargain'd for the joint, —

Bawd. Thou mayst cut a morsel off the spit.

Boult. I may so.

Bawd. Who should deny it? Come, young one, I like the manner of your garments well.

Boult. Ay, by my faith, they shall not be changed yet.

Bawd. Boult, spend thou that in the town: report what a sojourner we have; you 'll lose nothing by custom. When nature framed this piece, she meant thee a good turn; therefore say what a paragon she is, and thou hast the harvest out of thine own report.

Boult. I warrant you, mistress, thunder shall not so awake the beds of eels as my giving out her beauty stir up the lewdly-inclined. I 'll bring home some to-night.

Bawd. Come your ways; follow me.

Mar. If fires be hot, knives sharp, or waters deep,
Untied I still my virgin knot will keep.
Diana, aid my purpose!

Bawd. What have we to do with Diana? Pray you, will you go with us? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Tarsus. A room in* CLEON'S *house.*

Enter CLEON *and* DIONYZA.

Dion. Why, are you foolish? Can it be undone?
Cle. O Dionyza, such a piece of slaughter
The sun and moon ne'er look'd upon!
Dion. I think
You 'll turn a child again.

Cle. Were I chief lord of all this spacious world,
I 'ld give it to undo the deed. O lady,
Much less in blood than virtue, yet a princess
To equal any single crown o' th' earth
I' th' justice of compare! O villain Leonine!
Whom thou hast poison'd too:
If thou hadst drunk to him, 't had been a kindness
Becoming well thy fact: what canst thou say
When noble Pericles shall demand his child?
Dion. That she is dead. Nurses are not the fates,
To foster it, nor ever to preserve.
She died at night; I 'll say so. Who can cross it?
Unless you play the pious innocent,
And for an honest attribute cry out
She died by foul play.
Cle. O, go to. Well, well,
Of all the faults beneath the heavens, the gods
Do like this worst.
Dion. Be one of those that think
The petty wrens of Tarsus will fly hence,
And open this to Pericles. I do shame
To think of what a noble strain you are,
And of how coward a spirit.
Cle. To such proceeding
Who ever but his approbation added,
Though not his prime consent, he did not flow
From honourable sources.
Dion. Be it so, then:
Yet none does know, but you, how she came dead,
Nor none can know, Leonine being gone.
She did distain my child, and stood between
Her and her fortunes: none would look on her,
But cast their gazes on Marina's face;
Whilst ours was blurted at and held a malkin
Not worth the time of day. It pierc'd me thorough;
And though you call my course unnatural,
You not your child well loving, yet I find
It greets me as an enterprise of kindness
Perform'd to your sole daughter.
Cle. Heavens forgive it!
Dion. And as for Pericles,
What should he say? We wept after her hearse,
And yet we mourn: her monument
Is almost finish'd, and her epitaphs

[12] *fact* = deed, act.
[24] *strain* = blood, race, family.
[34] *malkin* = Moll-kin, little Moll; kitchen wench.

In glittering golden characters express
A general praise to her, and care in us
At whose expense 't is done.
Cle. Thou art like the harpy,
Which, to betray, dost, with thine angel's face,
Seize with thine eagle's talons.
Dion. You are like one that superstitiously
Doth swear to the gods that winter kills the flies:
But yet I know you 'll do as I advise. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Enter GOWER, *before the monument of* MARINA *at Tarsus.*

Gow. Thus time we waste, and longest leagues make short;
Sail seas in cockles, have an wish but for 't;
Making, to take your imagination,
From bourn to bourn, region to region.
By you being pardon'd, we commit no crime
To use one language in each several clime
Where our scenes seem to live. I do beseech you
To learn of me, who stand i' th' gaps to teach you,
The stages of our story. Pericles
Is now again thwarting the wayward seas,
Attended on by many a lord and knight,
To see his daughter, all his life's delight.
Old Escanes, whom Helicanus late
Advanc'd in time to great and high estate,
Is left to govern. Bear you it in mind,
Old Helicanus goes along behind.
Well-sailing ships and bounteous winds have brought
This king to Tarsus, — think his pilot thought;
So with his steerage shall your thoughts grow on, —
To fetch his daughter home, who first is gone.
Like motes and shadows see them move awhile;
Your ears unto your eyes I 'll reconcile.

DUMB SHOW.

Enter PERICLES, *at one door, with all his train*: CLEON *and* DIONYZA, *at the other.* CLEON *shows* PERICLES *the tomb; whereat* PERICLES *makes lamentation, puts on sackcloth, and in a mighty passion departs. Then exeunt* CLEON *and* DIONYZA.

See how belief may suffer by foul show!
This borrow'd passion stands for true old woe;
And Pericles, in sorrow all devour'd,
With sighs shot through, and biggest tears o'ershower'd,
Leaves Tarsus and again embarks. He swears
Never to wash his face, nor cut his hairs:

a mighty passion = a great grief.

He puts on sackcloth, and to sea. He bears
A tempest, which his mortal vessel tears,
And yet he rides it out. Now please you wit
The epitaph is for Marina writ
By wicked Dionyza. [*Reads the inscription on Marina's monument.*

> "The fairest, sweet'st, and best lies here,
> Who wither'd in her spring of year.
> She was of Tyrus the King's daughter,
> On whom foul death hath made this slaughter;
> Marina was she call'd; and at her birth,
> Thetis, being proud, swallow'd some part o' th' earth:
> Therefore the earth, fearing to be o'erflow'd,
> Hath Thetis' birth-child on the heavens bestow'd:
> Wherefore she does, and swears she 'll never stint,
> Make raging battery upon shores of flint."

No visor does become black villany
So well as soft and tender flattery.
Let Pericles believe his daughter 's dead,
And bear his courses to be ordered
By Lady Fortune; while our scene must play
His daughter's woe and heavy well-a-day
In her unholy service. Patience, then,
And think you now are all in Mytilene. [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *Mytilene. A street before the brothel.*

Enter, from the brothel, two Gentlemen.

First Gent. Did you ever hear the like?

Sec. Gent. No, nor never shall do in such a place as this, she being once gone.

First Gent. But to have divinity preached there! did you ever dream of such a thing?

Sec. Gent. No, no. Come, I am for no more bawdy-houses: shall 's go hear the vestals sing?

First Gent. I 'll do any thing now that is virtuous; but I am out of the road of rutting for ever. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *The same. A room in the brothel.*

Enter Pandar, Bawd, *and* BOULT.

Pand. Well, I had rather than twice the worth of her she had ne'er come here.

Bawd. Fie, fie upon her! she 's able to freeze the god Priapus, and undo a whole generation. We must either get her

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[41] *Thetis* = the sea.

[3] *Priapus:* the god of fertility and generative power, whose statue, symbolically developed, was erected in gardens.

ravish'd, or be rid of her. When she should do for clients her fitment, and do me the kindness of our profession, she has me her quirks, her reasons, her master reasons, her prayers, her knees; that she would make a puritan of the Devil, if he should cheapen a kiss of her.

Boult. 'Faith, I must ravish her, or she 'll disfurnish us of all our cavaliers, and make our swearers priests.

Pand. Now, the pox upon her green-sickness for me!

Bawd. 'Faith, there 's no way to be rid on 't but by the way to the pox. Here comes the Lord Lysimachus disguis'd.

Boult. We should have both lord and lown, if the peevish baggage would but give way to customers.

Enter LYSIMACHUS.

Lys. How now! How a dozen of virginities?

Bawd. Now, the gods to-bless your honour!

Boult. I am glad to see your honour in good health.

Lys. You may so; 't is the better for you that your resorters stand upon sound legs. How now, wholesome iniquity! have you that a man may deal withal, and defy the surgeon?

Bawd. We have here one, sir, if she would — but there never came her like in Mytilene.

Lys. If she 'ld do the deed of darkness, thou wouldst say.

Bawd. Your honour knows what 't is to say well enough.

Lys. Well, call forth, call forth. [*Exit Boult.*

Bawd. For flesh and blood, sir, white and red, you shall see a rose; and she were a rose indeed, if she had but —

Lys. What, prithee?

Bawd. O, sir, I can be modest.

Lys. That dignifies the renown of a bawd, no less than it gives a good report to a number to be chaste. [*Exit Boult.*

Bawd. Here comes that which grows to the stalk; never pluck'd yet, I can assure you.

Re-enter BOULT *with* MARINA.

Is she not a fair creature?

Lys. 'Faith, she would serve after a long voyage at sea. Well, there 's for you: leave us.

Bawd. I beseech your honour, give me leave: a word, and I 'll have done presently.

Lys. I beseech you, do.

Bawd. [*Aside to Marina.*] First, I would have you note, this is an honourable man.

Mar. I desire to find him so, that I may worthily note him.

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18 *to-bless* = bless. *To* was much used, and vaguely, as a prefix in S.'s day, and before.

42 *First I would have you note*, etc. The Bawd and Marina speak apart until Lysimachus interrupts them: "Ha' you done?"

43 *honourable man* = man of distinction, "person of honour." In her reply Marina quibbles.

Bawd. Next, he 's the governor of this country, and a man whom I am bound to.

Mar. If he govern the country, you are bound to him indeed; but how honourable he is in that, I know not.

Bawd. Pray you, without any more virginal fencing, will you use him kindly? He will line your apron with gold.

Mar. What he will do graciously, I will thankfully receive.

Lys. Ha' you done?

Bawd. My lord, she 's not pac'd yet: you must take some pains to work her to your manage. Come, we will leave his honour and her together. Go thy ways.

[*Exeunt Bawd, Pandar, and Boult.*

Lys. Now, pretty one, how long have you been at this trade?

Mar. What trade, sir?

Lys. Why, I cannot name 't but I shall offend.

Mar. I cannot be offended with my trade. Please you to name it.

Lys. How long have you been of this profession?

Mar. E'er since I can remember.

Lys. Did you go to 't so young? Were you a gamester at five or at seven?

Mar. Earlier too, sir, if now I be one.

Lys. Why, the house you dwell in proclaims you to be a creature of sale.

Mar. Do you know this house to be a place of such resort, and will come into 't? I hear say you are of honourable parts, and are the governor of this place.

Lys. Why, hath your principal made known unto you who I am?

Mar. Who is my principal?

Lys. Why, your herb-woman; she that sets seeds and roots of shame and iniquity. O, you have heard something of my power, and so stand aloof for more serious wooing. But I protest to thee, pretty one, my authority shall not see thee, or else look friendly upon thee. Come, bring me to some private place, come, come.

Mar. If you were born to honour, show it now;
If put upon you, make the judgement good
That thought you worthy of it.

Lys. How 's this? how 's this? Some more; be sage.

Mar. For me,
That am a maid, though most ungentle fortune
Have plac'd me in this sty, where, since I came,
Diseases have been sold dearer than physic,
O, that the gods
Would set me free from this unhallow'd place,

Though they did change me to the meanest bird
That flies i' th' purer air!
Lys. I did not think
Thou couldst have spoke so well; ne'er dream'd thou couldst.
Had I brought hither a corrupted mind,
Thy speech had alter'd it. Hold, here 's gold for thee:
Persever in that clear way thou goest,
And the gods strengthen thee!
Mar. The good gods preserve you!
Lys. For me, be you thoughten
That I came with no ill intent; for to me
The very doors and windows savour vilely.
Fare thee well. Thou art a piece of virtue, and
I doubt not but thy training hath been noble.
Hold, here 's more gold for thee.
A curse upon him, die he like a thief,
That robs thee of thy goodness! If thou dost
Hear from me, it shall be for thy good.

Re-enter BOULT.

Boult. I beseech your honour, one piece for me.

Lys. Avaunt, thou damned doorkeeper!
Your house, but for this virgin that doth prop it,
Would sink and overwhelm you. Away! [*Exit.*

Boult. How 's this? We must take another course with you. If your peevish chastity, which is not worth a breakfast in the cheapest country under the cope, shall undo a whole household, let me be gelded like a spaniel. Come your ways.

Mar. Whither would you have me?

Boult. I must have your maidenhead taken off, or the common hangman shall execute it. Come your ways. We 'll have no more gentlemen driven away. Come your ways, I say.

Re-enter BAWD.

Bawd. How now! what 's the matter?

Boult. Worse and worse, mistress; she has here spoken holy words to the Lord Lysimachus.

Bawd. O abominable!

Boult. She makes our profession as it were to stink afore the face of the gods.

Bawd. Marry, hang her up for ever!

Boult. The nobleman would have dealt with her like a nobleman, and she sent him away as cold as a snowball; saying his prayers too.

Bawd. Boult, take her away; use her at thy pleasure: crack the glass of her virginity, and make the rest malleable.

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96 *thoughten* = thoughted: that is, let your mind be possessed with the thought.
99 *a piece of virtue* = a virtuous young woman.

Boult. An if she were a thornier piece of ground than she is, she shall be plough'd.

Mar. Hark, hark, you gods!

Bawd. She conjures: away with her! Would she had never come within my doors! Marry, hang you! She 's born to undo us. Will you not go the way of women-kind? Marry, come up, my dish of chastity with rosemary and bays! [*Exit.*

Boult. Come, mistress; come your ways with me.

Mar. Whither wilt thou have me?

Boult. To take from you the jewel you hold so dear.

Mar. Prithee, tell me one thing first.

Boult. Come now, your one thing.

Mar. What canst thou wish thine enemy to be?

Boult. Why, I could wish him to be my master, or rather, my mistress.

Mar. Neither of these are so bad as thou art,
Since they do better thee in their command.
Thou hold'st a place, for which the pained'st fiend
Of hell would not in reputation change:
Thou art the damned doorkeeper to every
Coistrel that comes inquiring for his Tib;
To the choleric fisting of every rogue
Thy ear is liable; thy food is such
As hath been belch'd on by infected lungs.

Boult. What would you have me do? go to the wars, would you? where a man may serve seven years for the loss of a leg, and have not money enough in the end to buy him a wooden one?

Mar. Do any thing but this thou doest. Empty
Old receptacles, or common sewers, of filth;
Serve by indenture to the common hangman:
Any of these ways are yet better than this;
For what thou professest, a baboon, could he speak,
Would own a name too dear. O, that the gods
Would safely deliver me from this place!
Here, here 's gold for thee.
If that thy master would gain by me,
Proclaim that I can sing, weave, sew, and dance,
With other virtues, which I 'll keep from boast;
And I will undertake all these to teach.
I doubt not but this populous city will
Yield many scholars.

Boult. But can you teach all this you speak of?

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149 *Coistrel*=petty rascal. *Tib*=a she-cat, a drab.

158 *sewers:* in the old copies, *shores;* a pronunciation of *sewer* which prevailed until this century, and is now sometimes heard; *s* before a vowel as *sh*, and *ew* as in *sew*.

Mar. Prove that I cannot, take me home again,
And prostitute me to the basest groom
That doth frequent your house.

Boult. Well, I will see what I can do for thee: if I can place thee, I will.

Mar. But amongst honest women.

Boult. 'Faith, my acquaintance lies little amongst them. But since my master and mistress have bought you, there 's no going but by their consent. Therefore I will make them acquainted with your purpose, and I doubt not but I shall find them tractable enough. Come, I 'll do for thee what I can; come your ways. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Enter GOWER.

Gow. Marina thus the brothel 'scapes, and chances
Into an honest house, our story says.
She sings like one immortal, and she dances
As goddess-like to her admired lays;
Deep clerks she dumbs; and with her neeld composes
Nature's own shape, of bud, bird, branch, or berry,
That even her art sisters the natural roses;
Her inkle, silk, twin with the rubied cherry:
That pupils lacks she none of noble race,
Who pour their bounty on her; and her gain
She gives the cursed bawd. Here we her place;
And to her father turn our thoughts again,
Where we left him, on the sea. We there him lost;
Whence, driven before the winds, he is arriv'd
Here where his daughter dwells; and on this coast
Suppose him now at anchor. The city strived
God Neptune's annual feast to keep: from whence
Lysimachus our Tyrian ship espies,
His banners sable, trimm'd with rich expense;
And to him in his barge with fervour hies.
In your supposing once more put your sight
Of heavy Pericles; think this his bark:
Where what is done in action, more, if might,
Shall be discover'd; please you, sit and hark. [*Exit.*

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5 *neeld* = needle: a common spelling and pronunciation in S.'s day.

SCENE I. *On board* PERICLES' *ship, off Mytilene. A close pavilion on deck, with a curtain before it:* PERICLES *within it, reclined on a couch. A barge lying beside the Tyrian vessel.*

Enter two Sailors, *one belonging to the Tyrian vessel, the other to the barge; to them* HELICANUS.

Tyr. Sail. [*To the Sailor of Mytilene.*] Where is lord Helicanus? he can resolve you.
O, here he is.
Sir, there 's a barge put off from Mytilene,
And in it is Lysimachus the governor,
Who craves to come aboard. What is your will?
Hel. That he have his. Call up some gentlemen.
Tyr. Sail. Ho, gentlemen! my lord calls.

Enter two or three Gentlemen.

First Gent. Doth your lordship call?
Hel. Gentlemen, there 's some of worth would come aboard;
I pray ye, greet them fairly.

[*The Gentlemen and the two Sailors descend, and go on board the barge.*

Enter, from thence, LYSIMACHUS *and* Lords; *with the* Gentlemen *and the two* Sailors.

Tyr. Sail. Sir,
This is the man that can, in aught you would,
Resolve you.
Lys. Hail, reverend sir! the gods preserve you!
Hel. And you, sir, to outlive the age I am,
And die as I would do.
Lys. You wish me well.
Being on shore, honouring of Neptune's triumphs,
Seeing this goodly vessel ride before us,
I made to it, to know of whence you are.
Hel. First, what is your place?
Lys. I am the governor of this place you lie before.
Hel. Sir,
Our vessel is of Tyre, in it the King;
A man who for this three months hath not spoken
To any one, nor taken sustenance
But to prorogue his grief.
Lys. Upon what ground is his distemperature?
Hel. 'T would be too tedious to repeat;
But the main grief springs from the loss
Of a beloved daughter and a wife.
Lys. May we not see him?
Hel. You may;
But bootless is your sight: he will not speak
To any.

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[9] *of worth* = of high position, of rank. "Your worship" is merely "your worthship."

Lys. Yet let me obtain my wish.
Hel. Behold him. [*Pericles discovered.*] This was a goodly person,
Till the disaster that, one mortal night,
Drove him to this.
Lys. Sir king, all hail! the gods preserve you!
Hail, royal sir!
Hel. It is in vain; he will not speak to you.
First Lord. Sir,
We have a maid in Mytilene, I durst wager,
Would win some words of him.
Lys. 'T is well bethought.
She questionless with her sweet harmony
And other chosen attractions, would allure,
And make a battery through his deafen'd parts,
Which now are midway stopp'd:
She is all happy as the fairest of all,
And, with her fellow maids, is now upon
The leafy shelter that abuts against
The island's side. [*Whispers a Lord, who goes off in the barge of Lysimachus.*
Hel. Sure, all 's effectless; yet nothing we 'll omit
That bears recovery's name. But, since your kindness
We have stretch'd thus far, let us beseech you
That for our gold we may provision have,
Wherein we are not destitute for want,
But weary for the staleness.
Lys. O, sir, a courtesy
Which if we should deny, the most just gods
For every graff would send a caterpillar,
And so afflict our province. Yet once more
Let me entreat to know at large the cause
Of your king's sorrow.
Hel. Sit, sir, I will recount it to you:
But, see, I am prevented.

Re-enter, from the barge, Lord, *with* Marina, *and a young* Lady.

Lys. O, here is
The lady that I sent for. Welcome, fair one!
Is 't not a goodly presence?
Hel. She 's a gallant lady.
Lys. She 's such a one, that, were I well assur'd
Came of a gentle kind and noble stock,
I 'ld wish no better choice, and think me rarely wed.
Fair one, all goodness that consists in bounty
Expect even here, where is a kingly patient:
If that thy prosperous and artificial feat
Can draw him but to answer thee in aught,

Thy sacred physic shall receive such pay
As thy desires can wish.
Mar. Sir, I will use
My utmost skill in his recovery,
Provided
That none but I and my companion maid
Be suffer'd to come near him.
Lys. Come, let us leave her;
And the gods make her prosperous! [*Marina sings.*
Lys. Mark'd he your music?
Mar. No, nor look'd on us.
Lys. See, she will speak to him.
Mar. Hail, sir! my lord, lend ear.
Per. Hum, ha!
Mar. I am a maid,
My lord, that ne'er before invited eyes,
But have been gaz'd on like a comet: she speaks,
My lord, that, may be, hath endur'd a grief
Might equal yours, if both were justly weigh'd.
Though wayward fortune did malign my state,
My derivation was from ancestors
Who stood equivalent with mighty kings:
But time hath rooted out my parentage,
And to the world and awkward casualties
Bound me in servitude. [*Aside.*] I will desist;
But there is something glows upon my cheek,
And whispers in mine ear "Go not till he speak."
Per. My fortunes — parentage — good parentage —
To equal mine! — was it not thus? what say you?
Mar. I said, my lord, if you did know my parentage,
You would not do me violence.
Per. I do think so. Pray you, turn your eyes upon me.
You are like something that — What countrywoman?
Here of these shores?
Mar. No, nor of any shores:
Yet I was mortally brought forth, and am
No other than I appear.
Per. I am great with woe, and shall deliver weeping.
My dearest wife was like this maid, and such a one
My daughter might have been: my queen's square brows;
Her stature to an inch; as wand-like straight;
As silver-voic'd; her eyes as jewel-like
And cas'd as richly; in pace another Juno;
Who starves the ears she feeds, and makes them hungry,
The more she gives them speech. Where do you live?
Mar. Where I am but a stranger: from the deck
You may discern the place.

Per. Where were you bred?
And how achiev'd you these endowments, which
You make more rich to owe?
Mar. If I should tell my history, it would seem
Like lies disdain'd in the reporting.
Per. Prithee, speak:
Falseness cannot come from thee; for thou look'st
Modest as Justice, and thou seem'st a palace
For the crown'd Truth to dwell in: I will believe thee,
And make my senses credit thy relation
To points that seem impossible; for thou look'st
Like one I lov'd indeed. What were thy friends?
Didst thou not say, when I did push thee back —
Which was when I perceiv'd thee — that thou cam'st
From good descending?
Mar. So indeed I did.
Per. Report thy parentage. I think thou said'st
Thou hadst been toss'd from wrong to injury,
And that thou thought'st thy griefs might equal mine,
If both were open'd.
Mar. Some such thing
I said, and said no more but what my thoughts
Did warrant me was likely.
Per. Tell thy story;
If thine consider'd prove the thousandth part
Of my endurance, thou art a man, and I
Have suffer'd like a girl: yet thou dost look
Like Patience gazing on kings' graves, and smiling
Extremity out of act. What were thy friends?
How lost thou them? Thy name, my most kind virgin?
Recount, I do beseech thee: come, sit by me.
Mar. My name is Marina.
Per. O, I am mock'd,
And thou by some incensed god sent hither
To make the world to laugh at me.
Mar. Patience, good sir,
Or here I'll cease.
Per. Nay, I'll be patient.
Thou little know'st how thou dost startle me,
To call thyself Marina.
Mar. The name
Was given me by one that had some power,
My father, and a king.
Per. How! a king's daughter?
And call'd Marina?

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118 *You make more rich to owe* = You make richer by your possessing them: *owe* = to possess.

Mar. You said you would believe me;
But, not to be a troubler of your peace,
I will end here.
Per. But are you flesh and blood?
Have you a working pulse? and are no fairy?
Motion! Well; speak on. Where were you born?
And wherefore call'd Marina?
Mar. Call'd Marina
For I was born at sea.
Per. At sea! what mother?
Mar. My mother was the daughter of a king;
Who died the minute I was born,
As my good nurse Lychorida hath oft
Deliver'd weeping.
Per. O, stop there a little!
[*Aside.*] This is the rarest dream that e'er dull sleep
Did mock sad fools withal: this cannot be:
My daughter 's buried. Well: where were you bred?
I 'll hear you more, to the bottom of your story,
And never interrupt you.
Mar. You scorn: believe me, 't were best I did give o'er.
Per. I will believe you by the syllable
Of what you shall deliver. Yet, give me leave:
How came you in these parts? where were you bred?
Mar. The King my father did in Tarsus leave me;
Till cruel Cleon, with his wicked wife,
Did seek to murder me: and having woo'd
A villain to attempt it, who having drawn to do 't,
A crew of pirates came and rescued me;
Brought me to Mytilene. But, good sir,
Whither will you have me? Why do you weep? It may be,
You think me an impostor: no, good faith;
I am the daughter to King Pericles,
If good King Pericles be.
Per. Ho, Helicanus!
Hel. Calls my lord?
Per. Thou art a grave and noble counsellor,
Most wise in general: tell me, if thou canst,
What this maid is, or what is like to be,
That thus hath made me weep?
Hel. I know not; but
Here is the regent, sir, of Mytilene
Speaks nobly of her.
Lys. She would never tell
Her parentage; being demanded that,
She would sit still and weep.

Per. O Helicanus, strike me, honour'd sir;
Give me a gash, put me to present pain;
Lest this great sea of joys rushing upon me
O'erbear the shores of my mortality,
And drown me with their sweetness. O, come hither,
Thou that beget'st him that did thee beget;
Thou that wast born at sea, buried at Tarsus,
And found at sea again! O Helicanus,
Down on thy knees, thank the holy gods as loud
As thunder threatens us: this is Marina.
What was thy mother's name? tell me but that,
For truth can never be confirm'd enough,
Though doubts did ever sleep.
Mar. First, sir, I pray,
What is your title?
Per. I am Pericles of Tyre: but tell me now
My drown'd queen's name, as in the rest you said
Thou hast been godlike perfect,
The heir of kingdoms and another like
To Pericles thy father.
Mar. Is it no more to be your daughter than
To say my mother's name was Thaisa?
Thaisa was my mother, who did end
The minute I began.
Per. Now, blessing on thee! rise; thou art my child.
Give me fresh garments. Mine own, Helicanus;
She is not dead at Tarsus, as she should have been,
By savage Cleon: she shall tell thee all;
When thou shalt kneel, and justify in knowledge
She is thy very princess. Who is this?
Hel. Sir, 't is the governor of Mytilene,
Who, hearing of your melancholy state,
Did come to see you.
Per. I embrace you.
Give me my robes. I am wild in my beholding.
O heavens bless my girl! But, hark, what music?
Tell Helicanus, my Marina, tell him
O'er, point by point, for yet he seems to doubt,
How sure you are my daughter. But, what music?
Hel. My lord, I hear none.
Per. None!
The music of the spheres! List, my Marina.
Lys. It is not good to cross him; give him way.
Per. Rarest sounds! Do ye not hear?

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209 *The heir of kingdoms*, etc. The corruption here is so great that the nature of it can hardly be discovered. Probably a line or two is lost.

Lys. My lord, I hear. [*Music.*
Per. Most heavenly music!
It nips me unto listening, and thick slumber
Hangs upon mine eyes: let me rest. [*Sleeps.*
Lys. A pillow for his head:
So, leave him all. Well, my companion friends,
If this but answer to my just belief,
I 'll well remember you. [*Exeunt all but Pericles.*

DIANA *appears to* PERICLES *as in a vision.*

Dia. My temple stands in Ephesus: hie thee thither,
And do upon mine altar sacrifice.
There, when my maiden priests are met together,
Before the people all,
Reveal how thou at sea didst lose thy wife:
To mourn thy crosses, with thy daughter's, call
And give them repetition to the life.
Or perform my bidding, or thou liv'st in woe;
Do it, and happy; by my silver bow!
Awake, and tell thy dream. [*Disappears*
Per. Celestial Dian, goddess argentine,
I will obey thee. Helicanus!

Re-enter HELICANUS, LYSIMACHUS, *and* MARINA.

Hel. Sir?
Per. My purpose was for Tarsus, there to strike
The inhospitable Cleon; but I am
For other service first: toward Ephesus
Turn our blown sails; eftsoons I 'll tell thee why.
[*To Lysimachus.*] Shall we refresh us, sir, upon your shore,
And give you gold for such provision
As our intents will need?
Lys. Sir,
With all my heart: and, when you come ashore,
I have another suit.
Per. You shall prevail,
Were it to woo my daughter; for it seems
You have been noble towards her.
Lys. Sir, lend me your arm,
Per. Come, my Marina. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Enter* GOWER, *before the temple of* DIANA *at Ephesus.*

Gow. Now our sands are almost run;
More a little, and then dumb.
This, my last boon, give me,
For such kindness must relieve me,
That you aptly will suppose

What pageantry, what feats, what shows,
What minstrelsy, and pretty din,
The regent made in Mytilene
To greet the King. So he thriv'd,
That he is promis'd to be wiv'd
To fair Marina; but in no wise
Till he had done his sacrifice,
As Dian bade: whereto being bound,
The interim, pray you, all confound.
In feather'd briefness sails are fill'd,
And wishes fall out as they 're will'd.
At Ephesus, the temple see,
Our king and all his company.
That he can hither come so soon,
Is by your fancy's thankful doom. [*Exi*

SCENE III. *The temple of Diana at Ephesus;* THAISA *standin* *near the altar, as high priestess; a number of Virgins on each side* CERIMON *and other Inhabitants of Ephesus attending.*

Enter PERICLES, *with his train:* LYSIMACHUS, HELICANUS, MARINA, *and a* Lady.

Per. Hail, Dian! to perform thy just command,
I here confess myself the King of Tyre;
Who, frighted from my country, did wed
At Pentapolis the fair Thaisa.
At sea in childbed died she, but brought forth
A maid-child call'd Marina; who, O goddess,
Wears yet thy silver livery. She at Tarsus
Was nurs'd with Cleon; who at fourteen years
He sought to murder: but her better stars
Brought her to Mytilene; 'gainst whose shore
Riding, her fortunes brought the maid aboard us,
Where, by her own most clear remembrance, she
Made known herself my daughter.
Thai. Voice and favour!
You are, you are — O royal Pericles! [*Faints.*
Per. What means the nun? she dies! help, gentlemen!
Cer. Noble sir,
If you have told Diana's altar true,
This is your wife.
Per. Reverend appearer, no;
I threw her overboard with these very arms.
Cer. Upon this coast, I warrant you.
Per. 'T is most certain.

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[10] *wiv'd.* This looks like evidence that one of the authors of the play was an Irishman; but it is only an example of the indifference of the Elizabethan playwrights to correctness in comparison with rhyme, or rhythm, or free flow of words.
[8] *with* = by.

Cer. Look to the lady; O, she's but o'erjoy'd.
Early in blustering morn this lady was
Thrown upon this shore. I oped the coffin,
Found there rich jewels; recover'd her, and placed her
Here in Diana's temple.
Per. May we see them?
Cer. Great sir, they shall be brought you to my house,
Whither I invite you. Look, Thaisa is
Recovered.
Thai. O, let me look!
If he be none of mine, my sanctity
Will to my sense bend no licentious ear,
But curb it, spite of seeing. O, my lord,
Are you not Pericles? Like him you spake,
Like him you are: did you not name a tempest,
A birth, and death?
Per. The voice of dead Thaisa!
Thai. That Thaisa am I, supposed dead
And drown'd.
Per. Immortal Dian!
Thai. Now I know you better:
When we with tears parted Pentapolis,
The King my father gave you such a ring. [*Shows a ring.*
Per. This, this: no more, you gods! your present kindness
Makes my past miseries sports: you shall do well,
That on the touching of her lips I may
Melt and no more be seen. O, come, be buried
A second time within these arms.
Mar. My heart
Leaps to be gone into my mother's bosom. [*Kneels to Thaisa.*
Per. Look, who kneels here! Flesh of thy flesh, Thaisa;
Thy burden at the sea, and call'd Marina
For she was yielded there.
Thai. Blest, and mine own!
Hel. Hail, madam, and my queen!
Thai. I know you not.
Per. You have heard me say, when I did fly from Tyre,
I left behind an ancient substitute:
Can you remember what I call'd the man?
I have named him oft.
Thai. 'T was Helicanus then.
Per. Still confirmation:
Embrace him, dear Thaisa; this is he.
Now do I long to hear how you were found;
How possibly preserv'd; and who to thank,
Besides the gods, for this great miracle.

Thai. Lord Cerimon, my lord; this man,
Through whom the gods have shown their power; that can
From first to last resolve you.
Per. Reverend sir,
The gods can have no mortal officer
More like a god than you. Will you deliver
How this dead queen re-lives?
Cer. I will, my lord.
Beseech you, first go with me to my house,
Where shall be shown you all was found with her;
How she came plac'd here in the temple;
No needful thing omitted.
Per. Pure Dian, bless thee for thy vision! I
Will offer night-oblations to thee. Thaisa,
This prince, the fair-betrothed of your daughter,
Shall marry her at Pentapolis. And now,
This ornament
Makes me look dismal will I clip to form:
And what this fourteen years no razor touch'd,
To grace thy marriage-day, I 'll beautify.
Thai. Lord Cerimon hath letters of good credit, sir,
My father 's dead.
Per. Heavens make a star of him! Yet there, my queen,
We 'll celebrate their nuptials, and ourselves
Will in that kingdom spend our following days:
Our son and daughter shall in Tyrus reign.
Lord Cerimon, we do our longing stay
To hear the rest untold: sir, lead 's the way. [*Exeunt*

Enter GOWER.

Gow. In Antiochus and his daughter you have heard
Of monstrous lust the due and just reward:
In Pericles, his queen and daughter, seen,
Although assail'd with fortune fierce and keen,
Virtue preserv'd from fell destruction's blast,
Led on by heaven, and crown'd with joy at last:
In Helicanus may you well descry
A figure of truth, of faith, of loyalty:
In reverend Cerimon there well appears
The worth that learned charity aye wears:
For wicked Cleon and his wife, when fame
Had spread their cursed deed, and honour'd name
Of Pericles, to rage the city turn,
That him and his they in his palace burn;
The gods for murder seemed so content
To punish them; although not done, but meant.
So, on your patience evermore attending,
New joy wait on you! Here our play has ending. [*Exit.*

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